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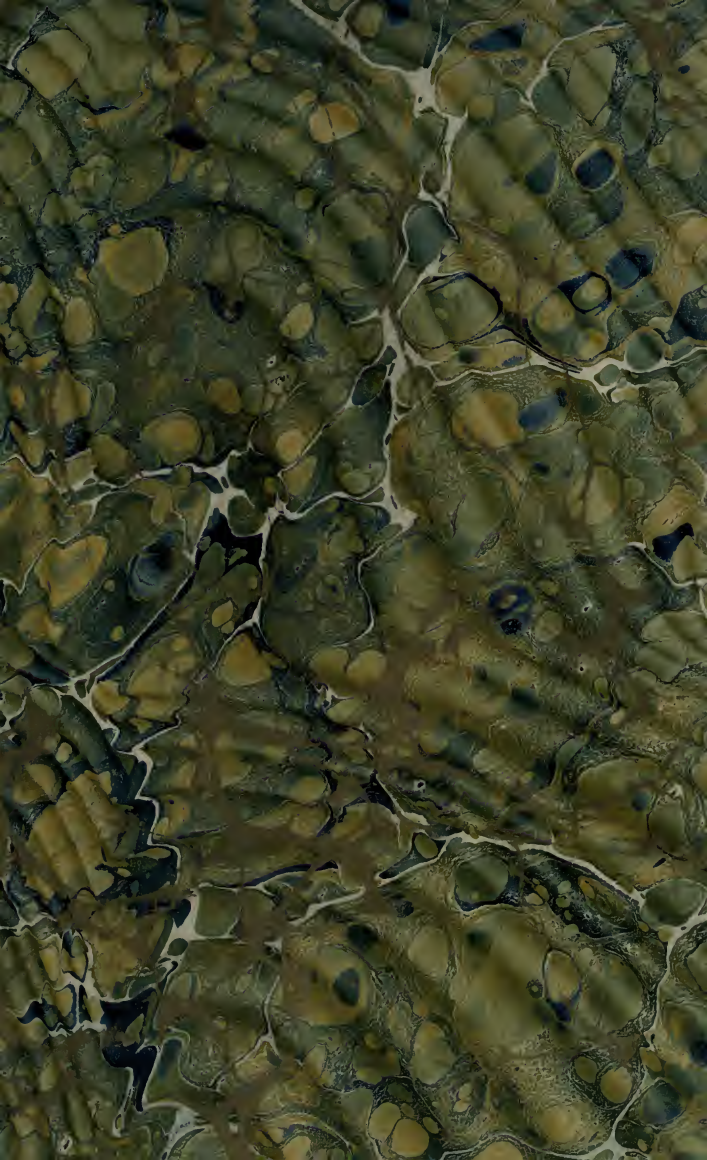
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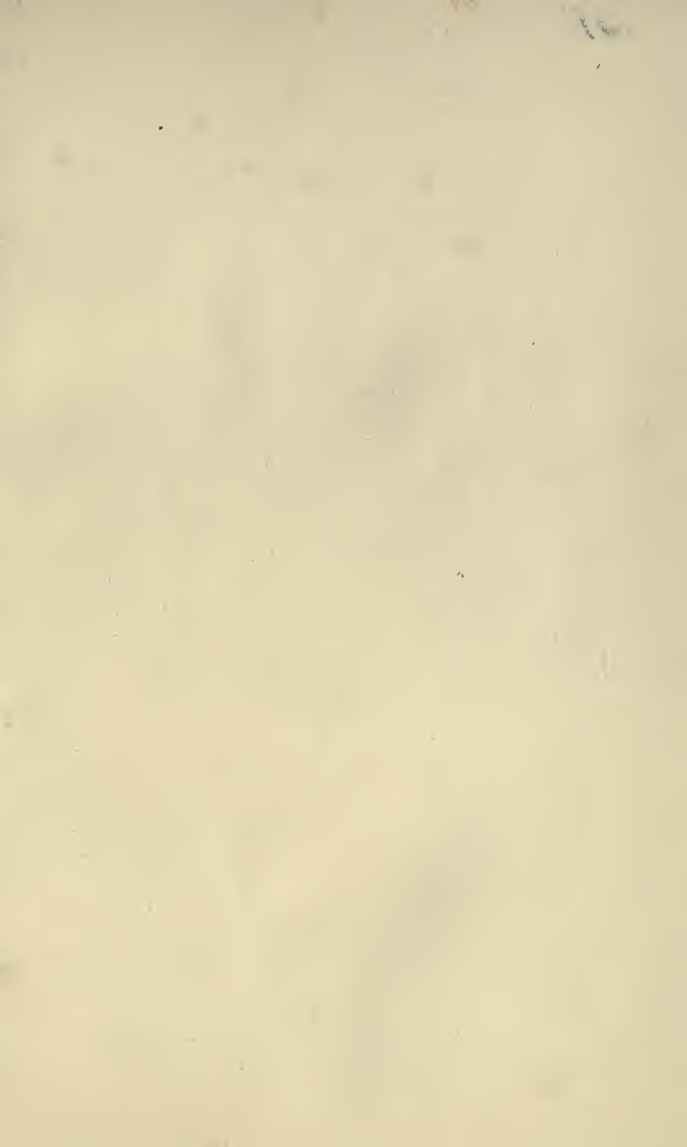
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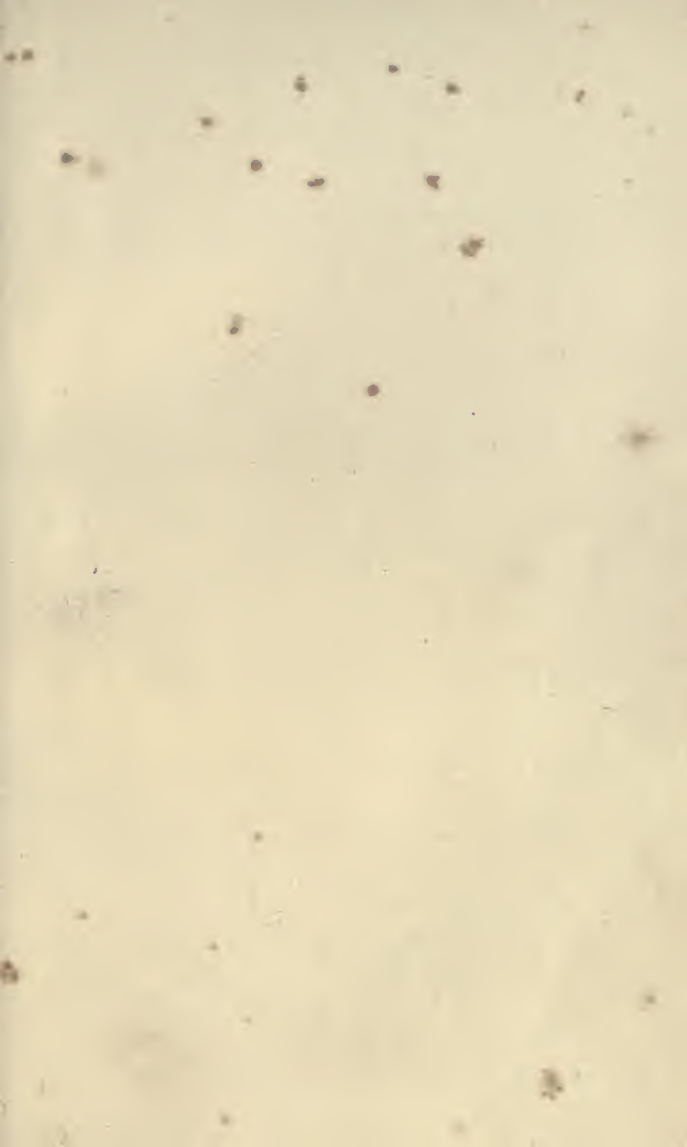
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J. P. Fletcher

THE

Angler's Complete Guide

TO THE

RIVERS AND LAKES OF ENGLAND.

BY

ROBERT BLAKEY,

AUTHOR OF "A HISTORY OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND," ETC., ETC.

"We win communion with sweet Nature's self,
In plying our dear craft."

OLD PLAY.

LONDON:

WHITTAKER & CO., AVE-MARIA LANE.

LIVERPOOL: EDWARD HOWELL, CHURCH STREET.

EDINBURGH: OLIVER AND BOYD.

1853.



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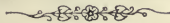
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PREFACE.

THE chief object of this small volume is to point out to the Angler the principal fly-fishing districts in England and Wales. Having some time ago written a work on the art of rod-fishing in all its branches,* I have since thought, that some general guide was required to direct him to those districts where the sport could be obtained in the readiest and cheapest manner. The present volume aims to fulfil this object. It is not, I regret, so complete and ample in its descriptions of some river and lake districts, as I could have wished; but my

* Hints on Angling, with Suggestions for Angling Excursions in France and Belgium. By PALMER HACKLE, Esq., London, 1846.

space being limited, I had no alternative but to compress my materials into the room allotted to me.

I beg to mention, that the substance of two of the Chapters appeared some years since, in the numbers of the London *Sporting Magazine*.

RICHMOND, 12th May, 1853.



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

The art of angling is one of the most agreeable, and morally improving, in the entire range of rural sports. It is cultivated with more care and assiduity in Great Britain than in any other country; and its inhabitants have fostered, in connection with it, a more ardent love of the beauties of external nature, and a keener relish for the sympathies which they awaken in the human breast, than any other people. They mingle the spiritual and contemplative with the manly and active; and to saunter by the banks of the river and the brook, is to them redolent of the most refreshing pleasures and charming associations.

This trait in the manners and pastimes of the inhabitants of the British Isles, has been often the subject of observation and comment

by foreign travellers and writers. An American author of great and deservedly high reputation, has remarked that, "There is certainly something in angling that tends to produce a gentleness of spirit, and a pure serenity of mind. As the English are methodical even in their recreations, and are the most scientific of sportsmen, it has been reduced among them to a perfect rule and system. Indeed it is an amusement peculiarly adapted to the mild and highly-cultivated scenery of England, where every roughness has been softened away from the landscape. It is delightful to saunter along these limpid streams, which meander, like veins of silver, through the bosom of this beautiful country; leading us through a diversity of small scenery; sometimes winding through ornamented grounds; sometimes running along through rich pasturage, where the fresh green is mingled with sweet-smelling flowers; sometimes venturing in sight of villages and hamlets; and then running capriciously away into shady retirements. The sweetness and serenity of nature, and the quiet watchfulness of the sport,

gradually bring on pleasant fits of musing ; which are now and then agreeably interrupted by the song of a bird, the distant whistle of a peasant, or perhaps the vagary of some fish, leaping out of the still water, and skimming transiently about its glassy surface." *

When national sports and pastimes are in strict accordance with all that is improving in body and in mind, they cannot be too zealously cultivated among the bulk of a people. They impart to all that practise them a healthy and vigorous tone to the understanding and feelings, and give a wholesome check to such sedentary habits, and recluse indulgences, as have a direct and manifest tendency to foster moping sentimentality and melancholy depression. What exhilarating and delightful sensations we feel when we gaze upon the river landscape—the meadows, the flowers, the trees—when in full luxuriant vegetation ! Except melancholy lie at the bottom of the heart in a very obdurate form,—we cannot fail to smile on the face of

* Washington Irving.

Nature, and to join in the universal chorus of joy and hilarity which she rings in our ears.

When Angling is adopted as a regular amusement, it then becomes a question, in what manner should we follow it, so as to derive the greatest amount of rational pleasure and improvement from its pursuit? If a man feels disposed to confine his skill to some piece of still or canal-water, for example, because it is just at his elbow, and can be reached without trouble, such a mode of using the rod is all very well; it may suit his years, his strength, and the amount of time he has to devote to the sport. But if he be young and hale, and is anxious to exercise the craft in all its phases and higher accomplishments, he must move to a distance, and throw himself into those parts of the country where grand and picturesque beauties are developed in luxuriant profusion. To remove from the monotonous banks of a canal or sluggish river, to the clear and sparkling waters of a mountain stream, is a change attended with many pleasing and exciting trains of thought and feeling, calculated both to

enlighten and invigorate the mind, and improve the heart.

The railway system of this country has entirely changed the general aspect and capabilities of Angling. The facility and cheapness of transit from one county or locality to another, has now given to the modern angling-tourist, such a wide and diversified range of waters for his selection, that he may at the present day transport himself into the most retired and romantic spots of England and Wales, at a less cost of time and money than would have been required, a few years ago, to have placed him for a few hours in a miserable punt on the banks of the Thames at Richmond or Twickenham. In fact, his sport has become cheapened in a remarkable degree. Starting, for instance, at five or six o'clock in the morning from London, he can be twenty or fifty miles down in the country, in any direction he fancies, by his usual breakfast-hour at home; and he can return in the evening after a day's sport, to his own domicile, there to expatiate to his own family on his exploits and adventures, or join

the general gossip of some neighbouring fishing-club or association. All this has materially widened the range of his operations, and greatly multiplied the amount of his pleasurable excitement.

The Anglers in all the chief cities and towns of England and Wales have railway-conveyances to first-rate fishing-waters in almost all directions. The London fisher, if he wishes to make a descent upon any of the waters in the south-west of England, has a ready conveyance from Paddington almost every hour of the day. Here he can have the choice of many excellent fly-streams, in a comparatively short space of time. If he should prefer the south-eastern section of the island, he has the Blackfriars Station at hand. The rivers of Kent and Surrey lie open to the Dover Railway. The whole of the north of England is readily accessible from Euston Square; and King's Cross, and the Eastern Counties', can take the angler to a variety of rivers in the north-eastern side of the country. The same ready access to rivers and lakes is afforded to all the numerous

towns and cities which lie in the route of the great sections of railway traffic in all parts of the kingdom.

It is a fact, and an agreeable one to contemplate—that angling tourists have greatly multiplied, and extended their travels, within the last twenty years. And one of the direct effects which have resulted from these occasional wanderings from home, into picturesque and romantic districts, has been to give a higher tone to the literature of angling, and to impart to it many of those pleasant and improving influences which the exercise of the imagination on external nature is fitted to produce. We have only to cast an eye over the general current of books which have issued from the press within the last quarter of a century, to recognise the intellectual advancement and raciness of recent piscatory writings, and to acknowledge that angling authors have indeed made very rapid strides in imparting amusement, instruction, and rational inquiry and discussion into matters of detail connected with their peculiar art. We find wit and humour,

and lively descriptive writing, in every direction; and this has chiefly arisen from a wider range of actual observation, and from the calling into requisition of those intellectual powers which the beauties and sublimities of varied and picturesque scenery bring to bear on the sentimental and emotional parts of our inward nature. Our feelings here are always in perfect harmony with external objects. When we roam amid deserted solitudes, overhanging precipices, stupendous mountains, or unfrequented forests, our hearts beat with wild and delightful sensations, and we find a corresponding utterance for them in the language of description, of poetry, and of sentiment.

True it is, that mankind are not all alike gifted with a keen relish for rural beauties. Numbers seem born with dull and gross conceptions, and altogether incapable of admiring the striking displays of wild and romantic scenery, or of "bathing their spirits in the ethereal blue of heaven." But there is still ample room, even here, for improvement. Such phlegmatic natures, though deeply engulfed

in the urgent calls of self-interest, the chimeras of ambition, or the gaieties of dissipation, may yet be placed under happier and more improving influences, and may gradually acquire a taste for the beauties of the external world around them. Such a contemplative and rational sport as angling is well-fitted to this desirable end. The pleasures which it yields can cost those who practise it no anxiety, nor rob them of any virtuous sentiments or feelings. They can be attained without difficulty, and enjoyed without envy. It is, in fact, one of those sports every way in strict harmony with Nature's sublimest lessons and teachings.





CHAPTER I.

The Eastern and Metropolitan District.

THIS angling division of England will necessarily embrace a great variety of waters: some having all the requisites of the mountain stream, and others possessing as few attributes of an angling water, as the stagnant pool or canal. This diversity is not, however, without its advantages.

There is no section of the anglers of Britain who display more pure and disinterested zeal in the "gentle craft" than London sportsmen; and the only regret we feel is, that their range of operations is so limited, and the quality of the sport they obtain so inferior. Habit, however, which takes the sting out of adverse circumstances, and equalises the degrees of happiness and pleasure, has reconciled them to their lot; and it only remains for us to give

such an enumeration of their fishing stations, both public and private, as shall be serviceable to the general bulk of metropolitan anglers.

The Thames.

"Strong without rage, without o'erflowing, full."—DENHAM.

Of all the numerous rivers of England which irrigate its soil, and embellish its landscapes, the *Thames* is the most important. It has many claims upon our attention besides its angling capabilities. It is the seat of the most extended and valuable commerce the world ever witnessed; the scenery on its banks is adorned with every thing that wealth and refinement can impart; and its literary and historical recollections are of the most interesting description.

The Thames rises from the foot of the Cotswold Hills, in Gloucestershire, and, under the name of the *Churne*, runs in a south direction to Cricklade, in that county. From thence its course is eastward, with a slight inclination towards the north, as far as to where it receives the *Windrush*, from whence it takes its course

to Abingdon. During this section of its route, it becomes mingled with several tributary streams: the *Isis*, at Cricklade, from the south; the *Roy* and the *Ock*, which, flowing eastward, join it at Abingdon, and which rise out of the same ridge of hills which give birth to the *Churne*, the *Colne*, the *Lech*, the *Windrush*, and the *Evenlode*. From Abingdon, with many sinuosities, it runs east-south-east to Reading, receiving in its course the *Thame* and the *Ray*, which spring from the foot of the north-eastern chalk ridge, beyond Aylesbury. At Reading, on the south, it is joined by the *Kennet*, and a little beyond, by the *Lodden*. From Reading it winds towards the north, returning to the same parallel of latitude at Staines, where its volume is augmented by the waters of the *Colne*. Hence to Kingston, its direction is eastward, in which route is the *Wey*, from Farnham, and the *Mole*, from the south. Its course from Kingston to Brentford is north, and thence, by many windings, to the sea. Between London and the ocean it receives the *Lea*, from Hertfordshire, and the *Roding*, from Essex, on the north; and on the south the *Darent*, and, close to its mouth, the *Medway*, from Kent. The whole length of the course of the Thames is upwards of three hundred miles; and the

tide flows up as far as Richmond, between eighty and ninety miles from the sea.

The banks of the Thames will afford the lover of tranquil and placid scenery a rich treat. It is impossible to traverse its winding course for twenty miles above the metropolis, without feeling the glow of admiration at the happy union of art and nature, as displayed in the noble mansions, neat and elegant gardens, the natty cottages, and the rural dwellings, which stud, on each side, its rich and luxurious banks.

The Thames is a surprising river for the number and variety of its fish. Salmon are now seldom met with, and trout are by no means common, even in the more elevated districts of the river, where the impediments to their increase are but few in number. What trout are found, however, in its waters, are commonly very large, and of the most delicious richness. They have been often caught from five to fifteen pounds; and there was a fine one taken in 1846, at Datchet, near Windsor, seventeen pounds, six ounces. The following fish are abundant in the river: pike, perch, chub, barbel, eels, flounders, lampreys, roach, dace, gudgeons, pope or ruff, bleak, and minnows. In addition to these, carp and tench are met with, in some particular localities. In all

the docks and canals, bream and smelts may be found. This, it must be confessed, is a very ample list for a single water to contain.

The angling stations on the Thames are very numerous, and fitted, in some degree, for various kinds of fish. The extension of steam navigation on the river has driven both fish and anglers further up the stream, so that there is scarcely a tranquil and secluded resting-place for the sole of the foot till we come to Richmond.

RICHMOND.

This is a fashionable and favourite resort for anglers, and there is good fishing for barbel and dace in the locality. It is requisite to pay attention to the tide at Richmond. The neap-tide, or when it is high-water at London Bridge at six o'clock, A.M., is the best period to angle here.

TWICKENHAM.

This is a celebrated spot, both in history and literature, and is about a mile and a half from Richmond. It is a good fishing station for barbel, chub, dace, and roach.

There is every facility and accommodation for punt angling.

TEDDINGTON.

This station is one mile and a half beyond Twickenham, and is a place much frequented by London anglers. Plenty of barbel and gudgeons are to be had.

KINGSTON AND HAMPTON-WICK.

This is also about a mile and a half from the last station. Barbel, roach, dace, perch, and gudgeons, are pretty abundant, and there is no lack of fishing guides to those who require them.

THAMES-DITTON.

This place is opposite Hampton Court, and is much frequented by anglers, both from London and the neighbouring towns and villages. There is good fishing here for barbel, perch, chub, roach, and dace.

HAMPTON COURT.

In the long deep called the *Water Gallery*, there are a great many barbel, roach, dace, and perch. The Thames assumes a new aspect at this interesting locality, by being intersected with several small islands, which divide the water, and form narrow channels and streams, favourable for particular kinds of fishing. The

place is also exceedingly interesting to the antiquarian and the historian.

HAMPTON.

This village is a favourite spot for anglers. Barbel, roach, and gudgeons, are plentiful; and every accommodation in the way of punts and fishermen can be obtained.

SUNBURY.

This village is sixteen miles from London, and here trout appear to give evidence of their existence; gudgeons, barbel, dace, roach, and eels, are abundant.

SHEPPERTON.

This spot is nineteen miles from London, and the waters are well stocked with chub, barbel, dace, and gudgeons.

WALTON.

This place is on the Surrey side of the Thames, and is eighteen miles from London. It abounds with large barbel, dace, chub, and roach.

WEYBRIDGE.

This station is two miles from Walton, and

in the long stretch of deep water in its locality, there are large barbel, chub, and roach.

Some trout have been occasionally taken out here, with minnow, of considerable size.

CHERTSEY BRIDGE.

This angling rendezvous is twenty miles from the city. There is a fair proportion of ground fish in the waters in this vicinity. It is interesting to poets, for it is mentioned by Shakespeare, in his *Richard III.*, and

“Here the last accents flowed from Cowley’s tongue.”

SALEHAM.

This is situated about a mile from the preceding station, and here fly-fishing may be exercised, when the waters are in suitable order. There are said to be large barbel in this neighbourhood.

STAINES.

This small town, in Middlesex, is seventeen miles from London. The Thames has here good barbel, roach, and chub.

DATCHET.

There is a good deal of angling in the waters about this village. Some good trout

are occasionally hooked here, and large barbel near the bridge.

WINDSOR.

There is generally a good deal of angling going on at Windsor, and its vicinity. When the stream is in good order for fly, a few trout may be caught. The still waters about Eton College, are full of roach, barbel, and dace.

MAIDENHEAD.

This is twenty-six miles from London, and is a good angling station now,—from the convenience and rapidity of travelling by the Great Western Railway. Trout become in this part of the Thames more numerous than below: but seldom found so large.

MARLOW.

Is thirty-two miles from the metropolis, and its angling capabilities are much upon a par with those of Maidenhead.

READING, PANGBOURNE, AND STREETLY,

Are all good places; pike, perch, dace, barbel, and trout, may be met with here and there.

We shall now conclude our enumeration of

angling stations on the Thames, and commence to point out those rivers in the respective counties, which, according to our arrangement, fall under the head of this chapter.

Private and Still Water Fisheries

IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THE METROPOLIS.

There are several places in the neighbourhood of London, where anglers can get a day's sport, for still water fish, at a small cost of time and money. These places are very much frequented by anglers who only have a day to spare for pleasure now and then. There are three Fisheries of this description, near the *Shepherd's Bush*, Bayswater; which is within a sixpenny ride from the Bank of England. They are good collections of water, a fair stock of barbel, roach, and dace, and there are good accommodations for refreshments. I have known a London angler take away thirty pounds weight of fish, from one of those small places of recreation. The names of these Fisheries, are, *Willow Vale Fishery*; *Victoria Fishery*, and the *Star Fishery*.

Angling Rivers in Counties near to London.

MIDDLESEX.

The rivers in this county are the *Thames*, the *Colne*, and the *Lea*. The first has just been noticed; we shall briefly touch upon the other two.

The *Lea* arises out of Bedfordshire and flows into the Thames at Blackwall. It contains a great number of fish, of almost every variety found in the Thames, and it is consequently a favourite place of resort for London sportsmen. It flows through a very rich and pastoral country. There are a great number of subscription stations upon it, of various prices, and affording every facility to the angler which waters of this description can confer.

The *White House*, Homerton, is a spot much frequented. A subscription ticket for the year is half a guinea, and for the day one shilling. There are pike, barbel, roach, carp, perch, eels, dace, bleak, and gudgeon.

Horse and Groom, Lea Bridge. This angling station is about a mile from the White House. It is a highly-esteemed spot, both for the pleasantness of its situation, and the agreeable

company which resort thither. The terms are the same as at the White House; and the fishing of the same character.

A portion of the river above Lea Bridge is free to the angler; but the fish are not very numerous.

TOTTENHAM MILLS.

This is five miles from London, and about a mile further is the subscription water of the *Blue House*. The terms are, half a guinea per annum for bottom fishing, and one guinea for trolling.

BLEAK HALL.

This fishing station is in high repute among London anglers. There is an abundance of fish in the waters. The subscription is two guineas a year for both the waters of Bleak Hall, and that of Chingford.

WALTHAM ABBEY,

Is twelve miles from London. A considerable portion of the waters belong to the government; and permission must be had from some of the functionaries in the ordnance department, before the angler can be allowed to throw a line into the stream. The waters

are well stocked with all kinds of fish, and large trout are often caught.

BROXBOURNE, PAGE'S WATER, AND THE RYE HOUSE,
Are all good stations on the Lea, and an abundance of bottom fish is to be obtained.

The River *Colne* takes its rise in Hertfordshire. It is a good fishing-stream in some of its localities, where it is not injured by the mills and chemical works which are situated on its banks. I have seen fine trout taken out of it at Uxbridge, but the waters are here rigidly preserved. In some parts of the river pike abound, and the trout are very scarce.

Denham is considered the best trout locality on the river. A great variety of flies are used by anglers on this stream; and a good deal of fancy enters into what are considered *favourites*. The best ones I have found were the red palmers and a dark body, with drake or woodcock wing.



CHAPTER II.

The North-Western Rivers.

BEDFORDSHIRE.

THE rivers in this county are the *Ouse*, the *Hyel*, and the *Ivel*. These are not, however, trout rivers. The *Ouse* rises in the county of Northampton, and runs through Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Norfolk, and falls into the sea below Lynn.

The *Hyel* passes Woburn, and *Ivel* Biggleswade; and they both fall into the *Ouse*. They abound with pike, eels, bream, roach, and perch. Except for these kind of fish, the rivers in Bedfordshire are not worthy the angler's notice.

SHROPSHIRE.

The angling in this county is good, and presents a great variety. The principal rivers

are—the *Severn*, the *Vyrnwy*, the *Elun*, the *Tame*, the *Wevel*, and *Tern*.

The *Severn* is an important river, for the extent of its course, the distance for which it is navigable, and the commerce which it sustains. It rises from several sources below Mount Plinlimmon, in Wales, the different streams of which unite at Llanidloes; thence it pursues a winding course to Shrewsbury, in which distance, about one hundred miles, it receives many tributary streams. At Shrewsbury it winds considerably, and receives the *Tern* at the foot of the Wrekin, about which it describes a semicircle; then curving repeatedly, it flows towards Colebrook-Dale, from whence it flows on in a north-west direction to Tewkesbury. Within this course, besides inferior streams, the *Severn* receives the *Tame* at Worcester, from the west; and it receives, at Tewkesbury, the *Avon*, from the north-east; after which, turning to the south-west, it winds its way to the Bristol Channel, receiving at its mouth the *Wye* from the north, the *Avon* from the south-east. The whole course of the *Severn* is about three hundred and twenty miles, and for upwards of two hundred and twenty miles it is navigable.

The salmon of the *Severn* are famous, and

its trout are rich, and generally large. It contains, besides these, carp, perch, roach, chub, and grayling, some of which have weighed above five pounds.

The *Vyrnwy* is a good stream, but the best portion of it, for the fly, lies out of the boundaries of this county.

The *Elun* is a favourite stream with many scientific anglers. It springs from near to Bishop's Castle, passes Ludlow, where it receives the waters of the *Carve*, then flows on to Tenbury, and ultimately falls into the Severn not far from Worcester.

There is a great quantity of trout and grayling in this water. The fly-fishing is really good, and the general aspect of the scenery delightful. The late Sir Humphrey Davy makes the following observations on this stream: "How beautiful these banks! and the hills in the distance approach the character of mountains; and the precipitous cliff, which forms the summit of that distant elevation, looks like a diluvian mountain, and as if it had been bared and torn by a deluge which it had stemmed."

The *Tame*, the *Wevel*, and the *Tern*, are all fishable rivers. The trout are but inferior in quality, although numerous enough to create good sport.

The flies recommended by Sir Humphrey Davy for these rivers are—a yellow-bodied fly, red hackle legs, and landrail's wing; a blue dun, with dun body; and a claret-coloured body, with blue wings. The drake, and starling, and peacock wings are all good in these waters.

The minnow is very successful in all these streams, especially after a freshet.

LEICESTERSHIRE.

The rivers in this county are not of much importance to the angler. The *Soar*, which is formed by the junction of several small streams, rises between Hinkley and Lutterworth. It falls into the Trent. The *Wreak* is a tributary of the *Soar*. It springs from the grounds in the immediate neighbourhood of Melton Mowbray. The *Auker* skirts the county for a few miles. The *Sence* flows into the *Auker* at Atherstone. The *Mease*, one of the feeders of the Trent, which rises in Derbyshire, is a border river for a short distance. Croxton Park gives rise to the *Deven*. The *Avon* is a border river, for seven or eight miles, between this county and Northamptonshire. The *Swift* is a tributary to this river. The *Welland* has a run of sixteen miles in this county. There are

a few trout in most of these waters, but common fish are the staple commodities.

NORFOLK.

The rivers in this county are the *Ouse*, which skirts the county and divides it from Cambridgeshire, the *Yare*, the *Wensum*, the *Waveney*, the *Bure*, and the *Nar*.

The *Yare* flows through extensive marshy valleys, in which there are considerable pools of water, called "broads" and "mares." The *Wensum* rises at Oxwich, in the neighbourhood of Fakenham, which it passes, and then flows in a winding course, full forty-five miles to the town of Norwich. Two miles below the waters of the *Yare* fall into it, and it then takes a north-east course, for twenty miles, until it expands into a broad sheet of water, called Breydon Water, four miles long, and full a mile in breadth. It reaches the German Ocean after a run of seventy-four miles.

The *Waveney* rises at Lopham, and flows eastward, and passes Digs, Bungay, and Beccles, to its junction with the *Yare*, a distance of full fifty miles.

The *Bure* rises, near to Melton-Constable, and passes by Aylsham, and falls into the *Yare*, after a run of fifty miles. The *Taes*

and the *Thurn* are tributaries to these rivers.

The *Nar* has a course of twenty-two miles, and falls into the Ouse above Lynn.

The angling in this county is not of any importance, except for bottom fishing, which is good, in the extensive broads and mares, which abound in almost every section of the county. Very large pike and perch are to be caught; and to those anglers who delight in this kind of sport, or who are strangers to fly-fishing, Norfolk will afford them excellent amusement.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

The chief rivers in this county are the *Nene*, the *Leam*, the *Cherwell*, the *Ouse*, and the *Welland*. But several of these waters only touch partially on this county. The *Nene* is formed by the union of two streams; the one rises near Arbury Hill, two miles west of Daventry, and the other feeder springs from the village of Naseby. The length of the river is about sixty miles. In its course it receives the *Ise*, twenty miles long, and the *Harper's Brook*, and the *Willow Brook*, each fifteen miles in length, and which take their rise out of Rackingham Forest.

The *Welland* takes its rise from Sibbertoft, in this county, and flows to its border, and separates it from Leicestershire, Rutlandshire, and Lincolnshire. The course of the river which properly belongs to Northamptonshire is about fifty miles in extent.

The *Avon* takes its origin from near Naseby, and has the upper part of its course in this county. The *Leam* touches also upon its borders. In all these waters there are but few trout; but still they are very large and rich-flavoured ones that are taken. The county is, however, a poor district for the angler. The mass of fish is of the common kind, such as perch, eels, roach, pike, and gudgeons.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

The principal rivers in this county are the *Ouse* and the *Nene*. The former traverses the county for twenty-three miles. The *Nene* is a border river; both these waters have several tributaries, but they are of little moment to the angler. The three mares, Whittlesea, Ransey, and Ugg, are large collections of water,—almost lakes. The first is the largest, and covers several square miles. It is much frequented by parties of pleasure during the

summer; and there is good fishing in it for pike, eels, and other common fish.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

The principal stream in this county is the *Cam*, which is formed by two branches; one springing from the neighbourhood of Ashwell, and the other from near Newport, in Essex. Several other smaller collections of water join the *Cam* before it reaches Cambridge. After it leaves this distinguished seat of learning, it sinks into fens, then joins the *Ouse*, and ultimately makes its exit in the waters which enter the sea at the town of *Lynn*. A few trout are seen now and then, and some of a good size; but the general mass of fish are of the common sort, such as pike, eels, roach, bream, and perch.

The river *Nene* only touches a part of the county just below Peterborough, where it divides into three channels. There are occasionally good-sized and rich-flavoured trout taken out of it; but in general it is only fit for bottom fishing. There are good pike, perch, bream, eels, and roach, in it.

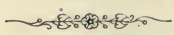
SUFFOLK.

This is also another county of but little

angling note. The lesser *Ouse* arises in the north part of it. The *Stour* springs from the south-west, passes Bury, and enters the great *Ouse*. There are also the rivers *Ald*, the *Deben*, and the *Blyth*; in all of which a few trout will be found, but scarcely anything worthy a fly-fisher's going any distance for. There is, however, an abundance of common fish, and some of them attain to a prodigious size. Eels of three and four pounds are not unfrequently met with in the still parts of some of these streams. Pike, perch, bream, and roach, are also abundant.

HERTFORDSHIRE.

The chief rivers in this county are the *Lea*, the *Colne*, and the *New River*. The two first have already been noticed. The *New River* has its origin near Ware. It contains a good sprinkling of trout in various localities. There is a great deal of angling on it, in diverse sections of its course.



CHAPTER III.

The South-Western Rivers.

THIS is a district of England very favourable to the angler. The rivers and streams which arise out of, and flow through it, generally possess those characters or attributes which suit the nature and instincts of salmon and trout; and they run through portions of the country which impart ideas of beauty and sublimity to the mind of man. The whole of this division, in a rural point of view, is exceedingly interesting; and the climate is so mild and balmy, that weakly and valetudinarian anglers may take liberties with their constitutions here, which they could not well do with impunity in more northern regions.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

The rivers of this county are—the *Thames*, the *Ouse*, the *Coln*, and the *Wick*.

The *Ouse* is a good stream for trout. The best station is about two or three miles above Buckingham. The *Coln* is also good. It runs past the villages Bilbury and Barnsby, and thence to Rickmansworth. It is no uncommon piscatory achievement to kill in this river eight or ten dozen of good trout in a day. The best flies are the red and black hackles.

The *Wick* springs not far from West Wycombe, passes High Wycombe, and runs into the Thames at Marlow. This is, in many localities, a good trout stream. The largest trout I ever saw taken out of it weighed three pounds and one ounce. It was a fine rich fish. From my own experience in the Wick, I prefer the palmers to any other fly.

BERKSHIRE.

The principal rivers in this county are the *Kennet*, the *Loddon*, and the *Lamborne*.

The *Kennet* springs out of Wiltshire, and enters the Thames, near the town of Reading. It is considered an excellent stream for trout, and there are several fishing stations on it. *Hungerford* is one, of considerable repute,—it is sixty-five miles from London. The waters here are full of fine fish, but they are preserved; and some interest, or some out-

pourings of the pocket, are required to be allowed to exercise the gentle craft in this neighbourhood. *Newbury*, and *Speenhamland*, are the next angling stations; and there are good sized trout to be met with in all the waters in the immediate neighbourhood of these places. Reading is thirty miles from London; but the Kennet is not here so prolific as in the more elevated parts of the stream. The sort of flies used on the Kennet, are of various hues; but in general light ones have the decided advantage, particularly in the higher parts of the river, over those of a dark colour.

The *Loddon* rises in Hampshire, but it is only fitted for bottom fishing.

The *Lamborne* is a small stream with a few trout in it, and a good many pike, perch, and roach.

The *Ock* takes its origin in the western parts of the county, runs a general E.N.E. course, receiving many tributaries by the way. It falls into the Thames at Abingdon. It has a run of about twenty miles. There are not many trout in it; though some of very considerable weight have occasionally been caught with the minnow. The pike are considered excellent in quality, as well as perch, gudgeon, roach, dace, and cray fish.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

There is excellent angling in this county. The chief rivers in it, are the *Wye*, the *Lug*, the *Monow*, the *Arrow*, the *Frome*, the *Lodden*, and the *Tame*.

There is most successful fishing in the *Wye*, (mentioned elsewhere) in this county. There are great quantities of salmon, salmon-springs or salmon pinks, trout, grayling, and a few pike and perch.

The best locality for the fly is between Hay and Builth. It is no uncommon occurrence for an expert angler to kill here one hundred pounds weight of salmon in a day, with a good portion of trout. This makes the *Wye*, in this neighbourhood, a first-rate water, and much frequented by skilful amateurs of the rod.

The *Lug* springs out of Radnorshire, and enters Herefordshire at Presteigne, passes Leominster, and then receives the waters of the *Oney*, the *Endwell*, and the *Arrow*, all abounding with good trout; flowing through an interesting country, and presenting many agreeable objects to the travelling tourist. The *Lug* flows into the *Wye* below Hereford. Leominster is a good fishing station; but

the angler must go a little distance from the town. The waters near to it are much fished.

The *Frome*, the *Lodden*, and the *Monow*, are all fine streams, and they all enter the river Wye. In the hilly parts of the country from whence they spring, they present a fine series of clear and limpid streams, just of that size and conformation which delight a fly-fisher's eye. It is impossible to over-rate these waters.

The *Teme* and the *Arrow* are both streams of the first order. The former springs out of the county of Radnor, and the other, from the higher parts of Herefordshire. The best angling stations on the Teme are Leintwardine, and Ludlow. The Arrow falls into the Lug, not far from Leominster, and it is a good trout water.

The flies for all the waters in this interesting county should, in general, be small, and the tackle delicate and fine. A light and neat mode of throwing the line is almost indispensable to success in this part of England.

I have known two anglers from London who have killed good creels of fish with the minnow in most of the rivers of this county; but, in general, the fly is vastly preferable.

OXFORDSHIRE.

The angling rivers of Oxfordshire are the *Thames*, the *Isis*, the *Windrush*, the *Evenlode*, and the *Cherwell*.

We have already noticed the *Thames* in a former chapter. The *Isis*, which forms an integral part of the *Thames*, takes its origin in the parish of Coates, in the county of Gloucestershire. It is a stream of little importance to the angler.

The *Windrush* springs out of the Cotswold hills, and running by Burford and Witney, falls into the *Isis*. The *Windrush* contains a few trout, and a good many common fish. It is not, by any means, an inviting stream.

The *Evenlode* contains rather more trout than the *Windrush*. The former springs also out of the Cotswold Hills, and flows by Whichwood-Forest and Charlbury. This river contains a good many pike and eels.

The *Cherwell* has its source in the county of Northampton, and running through its centre, falls into the *Isis*. It is full of perch, pike, eels, and roach.

CORNWALL.

This is a good angling part of England.

The rivers have all that clear and sparkling character so favourable for the trout and the salmon. The principal streams are—the *Tamer* (noticed under Devonshire), the *Fowey*, the *Camel*, the *Fal*, and the *Looe*.

The *Fowey* springs from the country between Bodmin and Launceston. Its course is very beautiful, and it is well stocked with trout, with a good sprinkling of salmon. The drake and woodcock wings are favourites on this stream, and, after May, the hackle and palmer flies will be found very successful bait.

The *Camel* rises out of the hills of Rough-tor, flows by Camelford, Bodmin, and Wade's Bridge, and then enters the sea at Padstowe. This is a trout stream of fair angling capabilities. The fish are not large, but they are plentiful, and of average quality.

The *Fal* springs from near to St. Columb, and runs into the basin at Truro. This is a good trout river, and salmon in August and September may be caught with the fly.

DEVONSHIRE.

This is a splendid county for the angler. All its rivers are of a first-rate character, both for salmon and trout, as well as for the beauty of country through which they flow. Nature has

here poured out her gifts with no niggardly hand.

The chief rivers are the *Tamer*, the *Plym*, the *Yealme*, the *Erne*, the *Avon*, the *Dart*, the *Ex*, the *Otter*, the *Syd*, the *Axe*, the *Teign*, the *Taw*, and the *Tarridge*.

The *Tamer* divides Devonshire from Cornwall, and in the more elevated parts of its course, before it becomes so wide previously to its entering Plymouth Sound, is an excellent trout stream. Salmon trout are also often caught in the months of August, September, and the beginning of October, with fly. Light coloured, middle sized flies are the best for trout-fishing in the spring; and the hackle and palmer flies in the summer, except after rains, when the winged flies have the advantage. The minnow is also a good bait; and in the dry and hot months of summer, when the river is shallow and clear, the red worm, behind the shade, may be successfully used. Large fish are taken in this way, when they cannot be otherwise obtained.

The *Plym* springs from the east side of Dartmoor, and enters the ocean at Plymouth. This is a good trout stream, and the further you ascend it, the better it becomes. The trout, however, near its source, become small, though of excellent quality.

The *Yealme*, the *Erne*, and the *Avon*, take their origin from Dartmoor, and very near each other. They are all streams of nearly the same character. They run through a country exceedingly beautiful. The trout in them all are very much like each other, both in size and colour. There are salmon in them, but they are by no means numerous. The streams in many parts of their course are rapid, clear, and sparkling; and in summer, and during very bright days, fine tackle must be used.

The *Dart* is a very rapid river for many miles from its source, which is situated in Dartmoor. It runs past Totness and King's Weare, and falls into the sea at Dartmouth. The river abounds with both trout and salmon, of excellent quality. The higher localities of the *Dart*, before it arrives at the level part of the country, are the best for the fly-fisher. The streams here are navigable.

The *Ex* takes its origin in the hilly country of Exmoor, in Somersetshire, and running by Tiverton, its volume of waters is considerably increased by the accession of the *Loman*, the *Creedy*, and the *Culan*. The *Ex* then proceeds to Exmouth, and there falls into the sea. There is good angling in this stream, and all its tributary waters. In the higher portions of them,

small flies should be used; but this must also depend upon the force of the curl upon the surface. Some anglers who frequent these rivers, from the metropolis, prefer the minnow to the fly. Salmon, both in spring, and in the months of August and September, are often taken with the fly.

The rivers *Otter*, *Syd*, and *Axe*, spring out of Somersetshire. They are all good trout streams, and are much frequented by the anglers of Devonshire. Small flies ought to be generally used, and pretty fine tackle.

The *Teign*, the *Taw*, and the *Torrige*, are likewise good streams. They all abound with salmon as well as trout. They pass through parts of the country of great beauty and sweetness.

As all the rivers in this county are of first-rate quality, the angler should take up his residence in some central spot in it. This will enable him to visit the best portions of many excellent waters, without having to travel over considerable tracts of country; thus saving time and money.

MONMOUTHSHIRE.

This is not an indifferent county for angling. There is an abundance of trout, and some of

good size too. The principal rivers are the *Wye*, the *Monow*, the *Lug*, the *Usk*, the *Trothy*, and the *Gavenny*. The three first have been already named. In this county there are delightful streams, in many localities they traverse, where fly-fishing can be enjoyed to perfection. The three last rivers also abound with plenty of trout; and salmon are occasionally caught in all of them, both in the spring and in the months of August and September. Minnow has been used in all these streams by several expert trollers, to great advantage.

The kind of flies generally used in these Monmouthshire rivers, are rather above the middle size. Some anglers greatly prefer black bodies, whilst others swear stoutly by the red. Winged flies are more used than hackles and palmers; though the latter are both excellent for all the waters in this district. When the May-fly is on the rivers, great quantities of trout are taken with the artificial May-fly; but I have never found but that, even during this season, the trout will take other descriptions of flies just as readily.

HAMPSHIRE.

This is a favourite county for angling; and many sportsmen have no hesitation in classing

it with Derbyshire and Devonshire. The principal rivers are—the *Avon*, the *Anton*, the *Test*, and the *Itchin*.

The *Avon* takes its rise about twenty-five or thirty miles from Salisbury, and running by that town, Fording Bridge, and Ringwood, flows into the sea at Christchurch. There is excellent fly-fishing in the higher parts of the stream. Below Fording Bridge it is not well adapted for trout; and we here find a living evidence of it, for pike greatly abound. The flies for the *Avon* are the red and black palmers; red body, with drake or turkey wing, but not very large.

The *Anton* or *Teste* rises about ten miles north-east of Andover, and has two branches. It is a good river for trout, though they are rather smaller than in other rivers in this county. The flies should be rather small. The minnow is a good bait here, after a freshet.

The *Test* takes its origin from the north-west part of the county, and falls into the Southampton Water. There are several angling stations on this favourite stream. Whitchurch, which is fifty-eight miles from London, is a place of resort for sportsmen. Leave to angle has to be obtained, either from the principal innkeeper, or some of the neighbouring gentry.

Stockbridge is another station. As the Test is a remarkably limpid stream, the flies and tackle should be of a corresponding character. There are many favourite flies for this stream; but the best for common use are the black and red hackles, and the palmers.

The *Itchin* contains a great many trout, and salmon are occasionally caught in it with the fly.

The angling tourist, in visiting this part of the country, should bestow an hour or two on Netley Abbey, near Southampton, a ruin of the most interesting description. The following lines, from the pen of Mr. Keate, are worthy of transcribing:—

- “I hail, at last, these shades, this well-known wood,
That skirts with verdant slope the barren strand,
Where Netley's ruins, bordering on the flood,
Forlorn, in melancholy greatness stand.
- “How changed, alas! from that revered abode,
Graced by proud majesty in ancient days,
When monks recluse these sacred pavements trod,
And taught the unlettered world its Maker's praise.
- “Now sunk, deserted, and with weeds o'ergrown,
Yon prostrate walls their harder fate bewail;
Low on the ground their topmost spires are thrown,
Once friendly marks to guide the wandering sail.
- “The ivy now, with rude luxuriance, bends
Its tangled foliage through the clustered space,
O'er the green window's mouldering height ascends,
And fondly clasps it with a last embrace.

“Yon parted roof, that nods aloft in air,
 The threatening battlements, the rifted tower,
 The choir’s loose fragments, scattered round, declare,
 Insulting Time ! the triumphs of thy power !”

DORSETSHIRE.

This may be termed a second-rate county in the angler’s estimation. Its chief rivers are the *Charr*, the *Eype*, the *Wey*, the *Froome*, and the *Stour*. They all abound with trout, and some salmon.

The *Charr*, the *Eype*, and the *Wey*, all take their origin out of the rising ground in Dorsetshire Downs. The *Charr* has good streams in it ; and rich trout. It enters the sea at Charmouth. The *Eype* receives the waters of the Brit, at Bewminster, and enters the ocean at Bridport. The higher parts of the stream are good for the fly. The *Wey* falls into the sea at Weymouth.

The *Froome* takes its source from the Downs, passes Marden, Newton, and then flows on to Dorchester. After leaving this town, it receives the waters of several minor streams, runs on to Wareham, and then forms the harbour to Poole. About two miles up the stream from Dorchester the best angling with the fly commences. The stripes of deep water, when a curl is on them, are particularly abundant in fine trout.

There are numerous favourite flies here, patronised by the local anglers ; but it is scarcely possible to make an unsuccessful selection out of a common stock of flies for these waters. When the fish take, they seem really in earnest.

The town of Dorchester, on this river, is a place of great antiquity ; it was called *Durno-varia* by the Romans. It was the scene of many severe battles between Charles I. and the Parliamentary Army, during the civil wars. At the assizes held here, in 1685, by the infamous judge Jefferies, thirty persons were tried on the charge of being implicated in Monmouth's rebellion, and twenty-nine were found guilty and sentenced to death.

Tesselated pavements, Roman urns, and a quantity of coins of Antoninus Pius, Vespasian, Constantine, and other Roman emperors, have been at various times found in the vicinity of Dorchester.

The *Stour*, the chief river of Dorsetshire, rises in Wiltshire, in Stourhead Park, on the border of Somersetshire, and running south-by-east, enters Dorsetshire between three and four miles from its source. After flowing about four miles farther in the same direction, it receives the Shreen water from the north, and soon after the Lidden, from the north-east. It then

flows in a very winding channel, south-south-east for eight miles, to the junction of the Cale, which comes from the neighbourhood of Wincanton, in Somersetshire. From the junction of the Cale the Stour flows south about three miles to the junction of the Lidden, and thence winds to the east, past the town of Sturminster-Newton, and through a depression in the range of the North Downs, and passes in a south-east course to the town of Blandford-Forum, after which it flows south-east for twenty miles to the village of Carfe-Mullen; and from thence four miles east to the junction of the Allen, which flows from the north, near Cranbourne. After it receives the Allen, the Stour flows east-south-east six or seven miles into Hampshire, after entering which, it receives a considerable stream, sixteen or eighteen miles long, from Cranbourne; and about four miles lower it joins the Avon, near Christchurch in Hampshire. The whole course of the Stour is nearly sixty-five miles; for forty of which, viz. up to Sturminster-Newton, it is navigable.

The trout of the Stour are rich in quality, and very abundant in every part of the stream. Winged flies are the best.

WILTSHIRE.

All the rivers and streams in this county are favourable for angling. They are the *Nadder*, the *Walley*, the *Bourne*, and the *Kennet* (already noticed). All these contain good trout, of fair size, and good quality.

The *Nadder* springs from the north-west part of the county, and passes Chilmark. It abounds with fine rippling streams, and is well adapted for fly. The long deep waters, when there is a favourable curl, will be found full of fish.

The *Walley* rises within a short distance of Warminster, and passes Yarnbury and Wilton. This is also a good water.

The *Bourne* comes from the eastern part of the county, and will be found a good stream both for trout and grayling.

All the rivers in this county fall into the *Avon*. They pass through very romantic and picturesque portions of the county, which leave a pleasing remembrance of them in the angler's mind.

The *Looe* runs but a short distance inland. It has two branches which, united, fall into the port of Looe. There are good trout in it, but they are not very large. The anglers on the river are partial to light-coloured flies.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

The chief rivers in this county are the *Severn*, the *Teme*, the *Avon*, the *Bow*, the *Salwarp*, and the *Stour*. The three first are noticed elsewhere. The *Bow* rises at Firkenham Forest, and contains good trout. The *Salwarp* has also a good number of fish. The *Stour* has trout, salmon, and grayling, in considerable abundance. Good-sized flies are required for the rivers in this county.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

There is good angling in this county. The chief rivers are the *Severn*, (described under Shropshire), the *Isis*, the *Wye*, the *Upper Avon*, the *Lower Avon*, the *Cam*, the *Stroud*. The *Isis* and the *Wye*, (mentioned elsewhere), are good trout streams in this county. The *Wye*, throughout the counties of Brecknock and Radnor, displays fine angling ground, both for salmon and trout. The red and black hackles, the palmers, the grouse, the woodcock's wing, the starling, and dotteril, are all good for the rivers in this part of the county.

The *Upper Avon* rises on the borders of Leicestershire. It is mentioned under that county. The *Chelt*, the *Stroud*, the *Cam*, and

the *Little Avon*, are well supplied with trout, and some of them with a fair proportion of salmon. The angling here, in the early part of the season, is good ; and in summer after a freshet in any of those streams, fine sport may be safely depended upon.

Of late years the use of the minnow has considerably increased in this part of England, and does great execution, when the waters are in a certain state, after a freshet.

The *Lower Avon* springs from near to Wootton-Basset, and divides the counties of Wiltshire and Somersetshire, and passing Bath and Bristol, falls into the Bristol channel. It abounds with salmon and trout.



CHAPTER IV.

The Eastern and North-Eastern Rivers.

LINCOLNSHIRE.

THIS is a good county for bottom fishing. The chief rivers are the *Humber*, *Trent*, *Witham*, *Welland*, and *Ancolm*. There are occasionally fine trout taken out of all these waters, but the principal sport arises from the pike, roach, bream, eel, gudgeon, &c.

The singular pits, or "blow holes" as they are called, on the coast of Lincolnshire, which are filled with fresh water, and which rise and fall with the tides of the ocean, abound with fine fish; and to those who are skilled in the mode of angling in them, a fair portion of sport may be obtained.

It is mentioned by Pennant, that in his day immense shoals of sticklebacks appeared every seven or eight years, in the river Welland,

below Spalding, and attempted to ascend the river in such a strong and powerful body, that it was no uncommon thing for men to earn from four to ten shillings a-day, by catching them, and selling them at one penny per bushel. On some occasions they were used for manuring the land, and various attempts were made to extract oil from them.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

The *Trent* is the main river in this county, which it first touches on the south-west border, at the junction of its waters with the *Soar*. The course of the Trent in Nottingham is fifty-three miles. The river *Idle* is formed by the united waters of several streams:—The *Rainsworth water* rises in Sherwood forest, and after flowing twelve miles to the town of Ollerton, it joins the waters of the *Maun*; these united streams still bear the name of Maun, until they mingle with the waters of the *Meden*, which rises at Whiteborough, and has a run of full sixteen miles: at this place the stream takes the name of *Idle*, and flows on to West Dryton, where it receives the *Wallin*, which has a range of sixteen miles. The Idle flows towards Bawtry for eighteen miles, and forms a junction with the Ryton, a stream which runs a

distance of twenty-four miles, and has its origin in Yorkshire. It then passes through the marshes called the "Car," and then falls into the Trent. The whole distance of this river is forty-seven miles.

The *Erewash* rises in the county, very near to the source of the Maun, and falls into the Trent. The *Lene* springs from the grounds of Newstead Abbey, and has a range of twelve miles, till it joins the Trent. This tributary passes through Newstead Park, and near to the town of Nottingham. The *Dover Beck* rises in Sherwood Forest, and, after a course of ten miles, enters the Trent. The *Devon* flows ten miles in this county.

Some of the streams in Nottinghamshire have a few trout in them; but the mass of the fishing is of a bottom kind. Large pike, perch, eels, and bream are met with in all directions.

The following lines, on the celebrity of the Trent for all kinds of fish, are from the pen of Michael Drayton, written (1612) nearly two centuries and a half ago: —

" I throw my crystal arms along the flowery valleys,
Which, lying sleek and smooth as any garden alleys,
Do give me leave to play, whilst they do court my stream,
And crown my winding banks with many an anadem;
My silver-scaled sculls about my streams do sweep,
Now in the shallow fords, now in the falling deep:

So that of every kind, the new spawn'd numerous fry
 Seem in me as the sands that on my shore do lie.
 The barbel, than which fish a braver doth not swim,
 Nor greater for the ford within my spacious brim,
 Nor (newly taken) more the curious taste doth please;
 The grayling, whose great spawn is big as any pease;
 The perch with pricking fins, against the pike prepared,
 As nature had thereon bestowed this stronger guard,
 His daintiness to keep (each curious palate's proof)
 From his vile ravenous foe: next him I name the ruff,
 His very near ally, and both for scale and fin,
 In taste, and for his bait (indeed) his next of kin,
 The pretty slender dare, of many call'd the dace,
 Within my liquid glass, when Phœbus looks his face,
 Oft swiftly as he swims, his silver belly shows,
 But with such nimble flight, that ere ye can disclose
 His shape, out of your sight like lightning he is shot;
 The trout by nature mark'd with many a crimson spot,
 As though she curious were in him above the rest,
 And, of fresh-water fish, did note him for the best;
 The roach, whose common kind to every flood doth fall;
 The chub (whose neater name which some a chevin call),
 Food to the tyrant pike (most being in his power),
 Who for their numerous store he most doth them devour;
 The lusty salmon then, from Neptune's wat'ry realm,
 When as his season serves, stemming my tideful stream,
 Then being in his kind, in me his pleasure takes,
 (For whom the fisher then all other game forsakes)
 Which, bending of himself to th' fashion of a ring,
 Above the forced wears, himself doth nimbly fling,
 And often when the net hath dragg'd him safe to land,
 Is seen by natural force to 'scape his murderer's hand;
 Whose grain doth rise in flakes, with fatness interlarded,
 Of many a liquorish lip, that highly is regarded.
 And Humber, to whose waste I pay my wat'ry store,
 Me of her sturgeons sends, that I thereby the more
 Should have my beauties grac'd with something from him
 sent;

Not Ancum's silver'd eel excelleth that of Trent ;
 Tho' the sweet-smelling smelt be more in Thames than me,
 The lamprey, and his lesse, in Severn general be ;
 The flounder smooth and flat, in other rivers caught,
 Perhaps in greater store, yet better are not thought :
 The dainty gudgeon, loche, the minnow, and the bleak,
 Since they but little are, I little need to speak
 Of them, nor doth it fit me much of those to reck,
 Which everywhere are found in every little beck ;
 Nor of the crayfish here, which creeps amongst my stones,
 From all the rest alone, whose shell is all his bones :
 For carp, the tench, and bream, my other stores among,
 To lakes and standing pools that chiefly do belong,
 Here scouring in my fords, feed in my waters clear,
 Are muddy fish, in ponds, to that which they are here."

STAFFORDSHIRE.

This is not an angling county. It has many collections of still water, in which large pike, bream, roach, perch, and eels, may be caught. Its principal rivers are the *Trent* and the *Tame*. The former takes rise in the north-west part of this county, ten miles north of Newcastle-under-line. At first it takes a circular turn towards the south-east, bending to the south as far as within ten miles of Tamworth, where it receives the *Tame*, flowing through that town. Afterwards the Trent flows north-east, towards Burton-upon-Trent, a little beyond which it is increased by the waters of the *Dove*, which run in a north-west direction. After this the Trent

receives the *Derwent*, which falls from the Derby Mountains; and the whole of these waters collectively flow towards the north, by Nottingham and Newark, to the Humber.

The Trent runs a course of two hundred and fifty miles. It is navigable for *one hundred and seventy miles* from the Humber; and, by means of canals, has a communication with many of the most important rivers of the kingdom.

The Trent, in many parts of its course, is a fair angling stream, and we shall notice it under the head of several counties.

The *Tame* rises in grounds near to Lardin, at which place the river Wasel-water flows into it. It then passes Drayton, Basset, and Tamworth, and receiving the Blackbrook, falls into the Trent. There are good trout in the upper parts of the Tame, and in both its tributaries; and the fly-fisher will find many spots in which he will find amusement. In many sections of these waters, the minnow is very successful.

SURREY.

The county of Surrey contains some good streams for trout-fishing. The *Wey*, which rises from two feeders in Hampshire, has a good many trout in it, both of good size, and

rich in quality. It runs by Farnham, Godalming, and Guildford, and falls into the Thames at Weybridge. I have found small flies, with light-coloured wings, good for this stream. It has a reputation for fine carp.

The *Wandle* is a beautiful and remarkably limpid river. It rises about five miles beyond Carshalton, which is twelve miles from London, and flows into the Thames at Wandsworth. The river is nearly all engrossed with private preserves, but many of the proprietors will give a day's fly-fishing, upon making an application. No other mode of angling is permitted. Carshalton is considered the best station on the river.

Nothing but small flies, and very fine gut, will answer for this stream. Should there be a good curl, larger flies and stronger tackle may be used. In general, however, a fine masterly method of throwing the line is indispensable in this very clear and sparkling water. The largest trout I have ever seen in the Wandle, was three pounds and three quarters.

The river *Cray* has a good many fine trout in it, and of very rich flavour. It takes its rise near St. Mary's Cray, and enters the Thames between Woolwich and Dartford.

The *Mole* contains but few trout, but they

are generally of a good size. About three miles above the village of Bletchworth, they are more numerous than in the lower extremities of the stream. There is good pike-fishing in many parts of the water. A few years ago, there was one caught in the vicinity of Bletchworth Castle, which weighed twenty-four pounds. There are fine carp in the Mole, often weighing ten and twelve pounds; and bream, perch, dace, and eels, in great abundance. At a mill in the neighbourhood of Broxham, six hundred-weight of eels were taken out of the stream in one day.

The scenery of the Mole in the grounds attached to Bletchworth Castle, is very fine. The philosophical angler will view the ruins of this once splendid castle, with some degree of interest, when he recollects that it was there that the celebrated Abraham Tucker wrote his "*Light of Nature Pursued*;"—a metaphysical work of considerable merit.

SUSSEX.

This county contains the *Arun*, the *Adur*, the *Ouse*, the *Cockmare*, the *Rother*, the *Breke*, and the *Levant*.

The *Arun* springs from near Horsham, runs by Arundel, and enters the sea a short distance from this town. Some anglers of this river

praise it very much for its trout, which are certainly of good quality, but not numerous. The minnow is good here.

The *Adur* rises nearly from the same locality as the *Arun*, and flows into the ocean at Shoreham. It is a fair trout stream.

The *Ouse* and *Cockmare* rise in the Wealds, and, uniting at Lewes, fall into the sea at Newhaven. Large trout are occasionally taken out of these waters, but they are not numerous. After a freshet, the palmer-flies are killing ones in these streams.

The *Rother* and the *Breke* join a little below Winchelsea, and they unitedly form the basin of Rye-haven.

The *Levant* runs by Chichester, and has a few trout in it; but the general class of fish, in all the three latter streams, is of a common kind.

ESSEX.

This is not a favourite county with anglers. Besides the Thames, and the Lea, already noticed, we have the *Roding*, the *Bourne Brook*, the *Ingerburn*, the *Crouch*, with its affluent the *Broom-Hill*, the *Blackwater*, the *Chelmer*, into which flows the *Sandon Brook*, and the *Ter*; the *Colne*, with its affluent the *Roman*; the *Stour*, and the *Granta* or *Cam*.

The *Roding* rises in the western parts of the county, and flows southward to the neighbourhood of Chipping-Ongar, where it is augmented by the Cripsey Brook, about eight miles long, from the north-west. The Roding then flows in a circuitous route for fourteen miles, past Kelvedon Hatch, Navestock, Abidge, Loughton, and Chigwell, to Woodford Bridge; and from thence, after a course of thirty-seven miles, through Ilford and Barking to the Thames. Trout are found in its elevated parts, but they are few in number.

The *Bourne Brook*, between the villages of Navestock and Havering-atte-Bower, passes, with a winding channel, the town of Romford, receiving, between Dagenham and Hornchurch Marshes, the small stream called the Hornchurch, and then flows into the Thames. The length of the Bourne Brook is only about twelve miles. There is good bottom-fishing in some parts of it; and pike have been occasionally taken out of it, of nearly twenty pounds weight.

The *Ingerburn* rises near the source of the last stream, and flows southward past Upminster, into the Thames. There is some common fishing in it. Its course is about twelve miles.

The *Crouch* takes its rise from the hilly ground south of Billericay, and runs a course of about twenty-five miles to the ocean, passing the villages of Ramsden-Cray, Wickford, Runwell, and Burnham. Ten miles above its mouth, it receives the Broom-Hill Stream. There are good pike, perch, eels, bream, and a small sprinkling of trout, which are, however, generally of a good size, and rich flavour.

The Blackwater rises near to Saffron-Walden. It traverses a south-east course of nearly thirty miles, and passes Redwinter, Weathersfield, Shalford, Panfield, Bocking, Great Bardfield, Coggeshall, Kelvedon, Great Braxted, and Little Braxted, to the neighbourhood of Witham. Here it receives the waters of the Pods-Brook, a stream which runs an extent of fifteen miles. After this junction, the Blackwater forms another with the Chelmer; after which it flows into the sea, having a course of forty-six miles.

The Chelmer rises near to the Blackwater, and flows a south-western course of twenty-four miles to Chelmsford. Here it is joined by another stream, which springs out of Thordon Park, and has a northern course of fourteen miles. The whole range of the Chelmer is about thirty-four miles. There are good pike,

and other still-water fish; and in some localities trout are to be met with, both of good size, and rich flavour.

The *Colne* springs out of the north-western part of the county. It runs for seven miles to Great Yeldham, where it meets with another stream nearly equal in magnitude to itself. The *Colne* flows into the sea at Mersey Island. It has a course of thirty-five miles.

The *Roman* rises near to Coggeshall, and flows for thirteen miles to the tide-way of the *Colne*. There are fine trout in the *Roman*, and some good pike and perch.

The *Stour*, which flows a course of fifty-four miles, belongs equally to Suffolk.

The *Cam* rises near Debden, and has already been noticed.

It cannot be recommended to fly-fishers to visit the county of Essex. They will only be disappointed and tantalised. To those who delight and are skilled in bottom-fishing, some good sport will be obtained, in nearly all the waters we have named. Indeed, we know one London angler, who goes regularly for a month every season to Essex, and speaks enthusiastically of the good success he meets with in almost every water he visits.

There are several Roman stations in Essex.

Roman antiquities have been dug up in many parts of the county, but especially at Colchester, where urns, pavements, and medals, have been found in great abundance. Tessellated pavements, and other ancient relics, have been discovered on Mersey Island. Colchester is supposed to have been, in the latter period of the Roman dominion, a Bishop's See.

KENT.

The county of Kent, in point of landscape beauty, is a very interesting one. In whatever direction we cast our eye, the same pleasing and diversified scenery presents itself; and on attaining any elevated piece of ground, the whole expanse is studded with enchanting objects. On every side we see the village spires, peeping over some bluff or elevated ground — neat and elegant country houses — and monastic or castellated ruins; while at the same time we behold rich woodlands, verdant pasturage, the light green of the Hop Grounds, intersected with translucent waters. The county is also appropriately situated for enjoying the salubrious breezes from the ocean.

This county is connected with the most important and interesting events in British history. It was probably the place which

received the earliest inhabitants. It was assuredly here that Julius Cæsar first planted the Roman standard, and the Saxons effected a landing, which terminated in the subjugation of the country; nor is it less certain that St. Augustine originally disseminated the Christian doctrine on Kentish soil.

The Medway has four principal heads; one rises in the manor of Gasson, whence it runs to Edenbridge, and passing Hever Castle, flows to Chidingstone, thence to Penshurst, where it divides again into two parts. The main river receives its second principal head from Gravelly-hill, Sussex; it enters Kent by Cowden, Groombridge, and Ashurst, and meets the Medway at Penshurst. Thence the river flows on to Tunbridge, where it separates into five channels. The third principal head rises in Hackenbury-Panne, in Waterdown Forest, in the county of Sussex; and then flowing to Bagham Abbey, proceeds to Lamberhurst, Finchocks, Goodhurst, and unites with the main river at Troyford. The fourth source of the Medway rises near Goldwell, in Great Chart, whence it passes to Romeden and Smarden, continuing its course towards Hedcarne, then to Stylebridge, so on to Yolding Bridge, and then at a short distance joins the main river.

The Medway abounds with fish, particularly carp, perch, tench, pike, dace, chub, roach, and gudgeons. Salmon are scarce, and seldom weigh more than twelve or fourteen pounds. They were formerly very numerous in this river, as appears from the records of many of the manors of the Priory of Rochester, which were compelled to furnish a certain quantity of salmon for the table of the monks. Fine trout are also taken in many of its tributaries; and some as large as twelve pounds, have been caught with minnow tackle.

There are six smaller streams, abounding more or less with trout, and other common fish, in the county; these are the *Ravensborne*, the *Cray*, the *Darent*, the greater and lesser *Stour*, and the *Rother*.

The *Ravensborne* rises on Keston-Common, and flows through Bromley, and the eastern bounds of Beckenham, towards Lewisham. It passes Lee and Deptford, and falls into the Thames. There are a few trout in it, towards its source; and in its lower parts it abounds with jack, perch, and other bottom fish.

The *Cray*, anciently called by the Saxons, *Crecca*, signifying a brook or rivulet, rises at Newell, runs by St. Mary and Paul's Cray, thence to Foot's Cray, Bexley, and so on to

Crayford Marches, where, joining the river Darent, in Dartford Creek, about a mile below the town of that name, and the same distance from the Thames, it flows into the latter river. The Cray abounds with trout, of the finest flavour, colour, and size, and far superior to the same species of fish produced in other waters in the vicinity.

The *Darent* rises in the parish of Westerham, but the trout in it are few in number. There are good pike, and perch in some parts of it.

The *Stour* consists of two streams, not far from each other, called the Greater and Lesser Stour. The Great Stour springs from two heads: the first at Well-street, in Lenham, running with a strong current towards Surrender, and thence to Goddington and Buckford Mill; the second head runs from Postling to Westenhanger, and, after receiving several tributary streams, passes to Mersham Bridge. The two streams uniting, the waters of the Stour pass Ashford Bridge, Spring-Grove, Wye, and Godmersham; thence to Horton and Tharrington, and, after receiving the waters of a brook, divide into two streams, which form three distinct islands, one above the other,—the second of which contains a portion of the city of Canterbury. It then flows on to the Isle of

Thanet, where it is joined by the Lesser Stour. This river rises in the grounds appertaining to Bourne-place, and being increased by the waters of Nailbourn, passes Bridge-place, Patricksborne, to the archiepiscopal palace at Bekesborne. It thence flows on to Lee House, to Wickham, and, when opposite to Wenderton, is joined by a stream flowing from Wingham, where the river proceeds until it joins its current with that of the Greater Stour, which it encounters in its course round the Isle of Thanet.

There are very large and fine trout caught in the Stour, weighing eight and nine pounds; and some have been occasionally taken of twenty pounds weight.

The *Rother* rises at Gravel-hill, in Sussex, and enters Kent in the parish of Sandhurst, and flows into the sea at Rye Harbour. It contains very good trout in many parts of its course, and in the months of May and June, a good day's sport may be obtained, if the waters are in fair trim.



CHAPTER V.

The Northern Rivers.

ENGLAND contains a considerable portion of good fishing-water; but it is at its extremities, or, rather, round about its edges, so to speak, that it is to be found. The heart of the country is comparatively level; and the streams which spring out of, and meander through, a very rich and highly-cultivated soil, do not generally possess first-rate angling capabilities. Water conveyance is a subject of importance, in a commercial point of view; and wherever a river, in the heart of England, could be made available to the purposes of internal navigation, this has been done. From these causes the trout and salmon fishing is not nearly so good as it would otherwise have been, had the streams been allowed to flow undisturbed in their natural beds through the whole range of country they traverse.

In pointing out the northern rivers and streams, we shall not include the Tweed, which properly belongs to a description of Scotland.

The first stream on the southern side of the Tweed is the *Till*. This takes its rise from the north side of the Cheviot mountains, flows down a fertile vale, and enters the Tweed near to Norham Castle. The Till is, in many places, much better adapted for minnow-fishing than the fly. There abound in it strong gurgling streams, and deep holes, overhung with bushes and brambles. Here large trout are to be met with; which, when hooked, require considerable tact in their management, for the banks of the river are by no means favourable for killing and landing trout and salmon of any great weight. I do not know how to account satisfactorily for the fact; but fewer salmon mount the Till from the Tweed, in spawning time, than run up any of its other numerous tributaries. The only thing I can divine as a probable reason is, that the bed of the river does not suit the salmon. It is, in large sections of it, clayey and spongy; and does not afford that proportion of fine gravelly soil which is so necessary for the fecundity of this noble fish. Certain it is, however, that not a tithe of the salmon are to

be seen here which ascend the tributary streams and rivulets which flow into the Tweed on its Scottish side. There can be no doubt but that unerring instinct rightly guides this monarch of the streams in all the movements connected with the propagation of his kind.

The sportsman will find the Till a better river for fly, above the village of Millfield Hill, than below it. The streams are longer and more rippling, and the bed of the river more conveniently framed for landing and killing fish. The best flies in the spring, that is, in the latter end of February, or the beginning of March, if the weather has been fresh and open, are the red and black cock-hackle, with grey or woodcock wing. A tolerably large-sized fly may be used in this early part of the year. After sudden freshes during the summer months, I have seen the trout take so freely, that it did not appear to be of any consequence what coloured flies were used: everything was fish which came to the net.

Before the angler leaves the banks of the Till, perhaps he may feel some interest in visiting Ford Castle, once a border fortress of great importance. It was built in the reign of Henry III. by Sir William Heron, and has been rebuilt by the late Earl of Delaval. There

are only two towers of the original structure remaining. This ancient fortress suffered severely from the Scots in an incursion in the year 1385. It was taken by James IV. in 1513, just before the battle of Flodden Field, which was fought in this parish of Ford.

The Till enters the Tweed at Tilmouth; but as it approaches the parent river its current becomes very still, narrow, and languid. This circumstance has given rise to the following rhyme, which the country people in the neighbourhood often repeat:—

“ Tweed said to Till,
 ‘ What gars ye rin sae still ? ’
 Till said to Tweed,
 ‘ Though you rin wi’ speed
 And I rin slaw;
 Yet where ye drown ae man
 I drown twa ! ’ ”

Twizel Castle, the seat of Sir Francis Blake, Bart., stands in this locality. Beneath this structure is the ancient bridge by which the English crossed the Till before the battle of Flodden Field. This is alluded to by Sir Walter Scott in his “ Marmion ”:—

“ ——— they crossed
 The Till by Twizel Bridge,
 High sight it is, and haughty, while
 They dive into the deep defile ;

Beneath the cavern'd cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall."

There is another small river called the *Bremish*, which takes its rise from the south side of the Cheviot range; and which is a good deal frequented by expert anglers from distant places. This river abounds with trout; but there are few salmon. There are long portions of it of a still and sluggish nature, where large fish are often found; but which are difficult to hook. The waters above the village of Powbourn are the best portions of the stream for fly. The country is quite open on both sides of the river; its bed is fine gravel; and there are numerous rippling, short, and gently flowing streams. Should the angler go to this spot in summer, after a good fresh, he will soon fill his basket with fine trout. As the waters of the *Bremish* are very limpid in this direction, small flies must be used in fine weather; but if there be any wind at all, it generally tells well upon the water, and therefore renders deception more perfect, with even tolerably large flies. I never found any particular fly a favourite in this stream; and I never heard any other angler who frequented it speak decidedly on this point. Everything depends upon the state of the weather, the condition of the waters, and the

strength of the breeze, for the kind and size of flies to be used. The minnow is of little use in the streamy districts of this river.

The river *Aln* is the next fishing-stream, as we proceed south. It is full of trout; and a goodly sprinkling of salmon are caught with the fly, in that section of the river from the flour-mill a little below Alnwick Castle to the sea. The *Aln* has no great range; for, at about twelve miles from its mouth, it is a very small rivulet. But there are, I believe, more trout caught in it than, estimating the extent of public fishing waters, are taken in any other stream in the north of England. There are many expert anglers in Alnwick, and the neighbouring villages which skirt the banks of the stream. Red and black-bodied flies, with good pointed drake or woodcock wings, are universal favourites in this river.

The *Aln* trout are generally small. The largest one I ever caught in it was three pounds and three-quarters. There have some been caught above four pounds, but few in number.

The river is strictly preserved, from about a mile below Alnwick to its source. It runs through the park of His Grace the Duke of Northumberland. About two miles above Huhn Abbey it divides into two branches, one taking

a north-west and the other a south-west direction. There is, therefore, only the distance from below Alnwick to the sea that is publicly open for sportsmen. This portion of the river, taking all its windings, does not average more than six miles. The tide flows up to the village of Lesbury; and here fine whitlings are often caught with the fly.

The finest parts for salmon, in the spring of the year, are those long stretches of deep water near to the Flint and Lesbury mills. The bed of the river here is exceedingly favourable for this fish; being partly of gravel, with a great number of large stones interspersed. Here they lie in perfect safety.

In angling for salmon in the Aln, good-sized trout-flies are invariably employed. The stream is but narrow; and the large flies which would be requisite in the main body of such a river as the Tweed would be totally useless here.

The quality of the trout is not first-rate; those caught in the tide-way are, however, very rich, and often as red as the finest salmon.

The angler on the Aln will be gratified by a visit to the castle, the baronial seat of the Duke of Northumberland. The building is of freestone; and, as well as the repairs and ornaments, is in the Gothic style, and in the purest

taste. The grounds around the castle, which are five miles in extent, and through which the Aln flows, are laid out in the most beautiful manner. There are two ancient abbeys within these grounds. The interior of the castle, which all strangers can readily see, is splendid; especially the chapel and its painted window.

Alnwick was one of the strong fortresses in the border wars. Malcolm II. of Scotland besieged it in 1093; but was killed by a soldier from the garrison. A recently-erected monument marks the spot. Prince Edward, son and heir to Malcolm, attempting to revenge his death, was defeated and lost his life. In 1174, William the Lion, Malcolm's successor, besieged the castle with a large army; but, being surprised at a distance from his camp, he was taken prisoner, and his army in consequence retreated. A monument points out the spot where his capture took place.

There was at Alnwick an abbey of Premonstratensian canons; the revenue of which, at the Reformation, was estimated at £190.

Next comes the *Coquet*, one of the best fishing streams in the north of England; nay, it may give a challenge to all England to surpass it. There is, at its entrance into the sea, at a small town called Warkworth, a fine

salmon fishery, belonging to the Duke of Northumberland; and this being carefully fostered, the whole extent of the Coquet, about forty miles, is unencumbered by any obstacle to the free passage of the salmon. The lessee of the fishery keeps watchers upon the whole line of the stream, to check the practice of poaching during the close season; which practice is, notwithstanding, still carried on to a great extent. Whole bands of men will come down from the hilly districts of the country, with horses and carts, and during the darkness of the night kill thousands of fish, both in sections of the river itself, as well as in the small bournes and creeks, which flow into it, and which are sometimes actually choked up with the number of fish which press into them for the purpose of depositing their spawn. It would greatly astonish a metropolitan angler, who has never travelled fifty miles from his home, to witness one of those evening marauding parties of salmon-poachers; to see the river illuminated with innumerable torch-lights; to hear the bold and resolute language which falls from the lips of those daring violators of the law; and to perceive the skill and adroitness they exercise in killing and bearing away their booty. A scene of this kind is never forgotten.

This free passage for the ascent of fish keeps the stream well supplied in every part of it both with trout and salmon; indeed the angler can go to no section of it but he will find sport. There are very few parts of the stream preserved, and these are of no great extent. An angler may travel the whole river, from its source down near to Brinkburn Priory, a distance of twenty miles, without the slightest interruption. During the season, that is, from the month of March till September, there are almost every day great numbers of expert fly-fishers on its banks from all parts of England. The best stations for a few days' angling in the Coquet, are Harbottle, Rothbury, Weldon Bridge, Felton, and Warkworth. Comfortable and reasonable accommodations will be found in all these places.

Almost all gentlemen, who have angled for a few seasons in this river, will bear record to the fact that the fish are the most provokingly obstinate that can well be imagined. When they are in the humour, ten or fifteen dozen are a fair day's sport; and perhaps two or three salmon additional. But it often happens during a season that the best and most skilful sportsman will come home with only two or three trout as long as his little finger; and yet there

has been no lack of diligence, nor any means left untried as to a variation in flies. This uncertainty has sometimes given the Coquet a bad name from strangers; who have, perhaps, come fifty or a hundred miles, and been thus scurvily treated. Falling upon one of these unlucky days, they have become disgusted, and have left the stream in a pet. Every visitor of the Coquet has witnessed numerous cases of this kind. I well remember a party of anglers from London, eight in number, making their appearance on the Coquet, on their route to Scotland. They fished the streams in all directions for seven or eight hours; and all they brought home were six small trout, not weighing, in all, three-quarters of a pound! Nothing could exceed their mortification. They swore there were no trout in the water, and that they had been grossly imposed upon by some friends who had spoken highly of this river. I endeavoured to convince them that their judgment was a hasty one, and that if they would wait for another day, in all probability they would meet with such success as would compensate in some degree for their present disappointment. But they one and all declared they would not rest a single hour longer on its banks; and they carried their

resolve into immediate effect. I remained to the next day, and filled my basket (a good-sized one) in a very short time indeed.

The Coquet is a remarkably limpid stream; you can distinctly see its bed at the depth of ten or twelve feet. When the weather is clear, it requires rather fine tackle and a skilful throwing of the line to do any execution. As a counterbalance to this extreme clearness, the country is comparatively open; and, consequently, the slightest breeze makes an impression upon the water favourable to the angler.

Many expert anglers of the Coquet have of late years abandoned fly-fishing, and have adopted the minnow. They affirm that they obtain a greater *weight* of fish in this way than by fly; but there are many conflicting opinions, on the superiority of the new plan, which it is difficult to reconcile. I have certainly seen the finest dish of trout caught by minnow, only this happened but seldom; whereas the fly is in perpetual requisition. This makes all the difference in the two cases.

When there is a good curl, I would advise the angler always to fish the deep waters of the Coquet; he will find much better fish than in more shallow streams. Some of the long ranges of still water are very full of fine trout;

because a great majority of them never leave these places, which afford such good shelter from the large stones which are in its bed.

The trout of the Coquet run generally small. The largest one I ever saw was five pounds and a-half, and he was considered a great rarity. They are of poor quality; and in many cases the angler will find that they will scarcely keep twenty-four hours, particularly if it be hot weather. Those caught in the tide-way, at Warkworth, are a great deal finer and more richly flavoured.

Every variety of fly is used on the Coquet. You will find *great favourites*, and infallible *killing flies*, of every possible colour and shape. I know no river where a man need be less fastidious about his bait than here.

The finest portion of the river for those who can only fish comfortably in an open country, is that commencing at the village of Shopton, and pursuing the course of the stream to its head. Near Harbottle the waters are exceedingly fine for fly; but in general the trout do not run any size in those short and shallow streams.

There are all kinds of scenery on the banks of the river; from the lofty and bleak mountains of the Cheviot, to the rich and fertile

vales through which it flows, near to the ocean.

In angling the Coquet, there are many localities on its banks interesting to the literary man and antiquary. Near the source of the river there are several Druidical monuments. One, near the village of Ilderton, consisting of ten large, rude, and unequal stones, arranged so as to inclose an oval area of thirty-eight yards from east to west, and thirty-three from north to south. The stones are mostly thrown down, and partially buried in the earth. There are Roman camps and forts at old Rothbury; at the Crag Head in Rothbury Forest; and in the district between Bellingham and Rothbury many interesting Roman inscriptions and coins have been found in late years.

Brinkburn Priory, the seat of Major Hodgson, is a fine building. It lays claim to considerable antiquity. It stands on the north side of the river, and cannot be viewed but with the deepest interest. When we tread its hallowed grounds, we fancy how grand must have been the deep-toned organ's swell, and the loud anthem of one hundred voices rolling through the roofs, and reverberated from the lofty rocks on the opposite side of the stream. With what touching devotion must the toll of the vesper-bell have

reached the heart, on the still silence of a winter's eve! We feel as if we heard those solemn sounds even now; and imagination peoples the place with all its former inhabitants: every inch of ground has been trodden by souls disgusted with the world, and who here took refuge from its cares and turmoils to hold converse with immortal forms.

Should the angler descend down the Coquet as far as Warkworth, he will meet with two interesting objects on the immediate banks of the stream; namely, Warkworth Castle and the Hermitage. The former was held at different periods by the descendants of Roger Fitz-Richard, and the families of Raby and Percy; to the latter of which it still belongs. Everything about the Hermitage is full of interest and feeling; and we cannot help, in traversing its cells, to think of the beautiful lines of Milton in "*Il Penseroso*"—

"And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage;
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightlly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew,
Till old experience doth attain
To something like prophetic strain;
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live."

The Coquet is quite a classic stream, and has called forth, for a quarter of a century, many beautiful songs from its enthusiastic visitors. We shall here insert at random—

The winter blast 's dead, and the spring breezes blow ;
If the haughs are patched white, 't is with daisies, not snow ;
The earth, for foul sleet, drinks the warm sunny rain :
Then, my boys, let us off to the Coquet again.

Down the hills leap bright feeders released from their chains ;
The very dry heather feels blood in its veins ;
All nature is stirring ; strong lambs on the lea,
Blithe birds on the bough, shew how backward we be.

The primrose peeps out on the edge of the burn,
With a doubtful pale face lest old Hyems return ;
Whilst the delicate perfume betrays it as clear,
That her purple-frocked playfellow hides herself near.

The bloodhounds of glory, unkennelling now,
Are taking the field, as we fishers do ;
But with fly-rods, not muskets, we march to attack,
And no knapsack for us, but the creel at our back.

The skylark and blackbird our bugles shall blow,
And the roll of our drums be the river's hoarse flow ;
Our flags are unfurling on every tree,
And I think we all guess where our quarters shall be.

The waters curl freely beneath the west gale,
And come down from the moors like the berry-brown ale ;
Unfished are the slacks, and unthrashed are the streams,
And we 'll make our exploits beat our sanguine dreams.

We 'll tempt them with black, and we 'll tempt them with grey,
Aye, the skeggers shall yield if they come in our way ;

We 'll raise them in shallow, we 'll raise them in deep,
In the pool's smoothest stretch, and the stream's roughest
sweep.

There is not a rude brae which the current makes wroth,
Not an angry eddy, be-whirling in froth ;
Nor a single old stone with a white beard of foam,
But shall pay for our visit, before we win home.

Our flies will sweep here, and our flies will float there,
As we try all the sleights of hook, feather and hair ;
Quick jerking out small, and slow leading out great,
Nor cease till galled shoulders complain of the weight.

The minnow in summer its monsters can kill,
And the worm loads our pannier when nothing else will ;
But give me the spring-time, the light-dropping hackle,
And the masterly cast with the finest of tackle.

Like a sensitive nerve is the long taper line,
That doth from the tenuous fly-rod decline ;
And the leap of the fish, with electrical start,
Strikes swift thro' the hand, on the high-bounding heart.

When the gods deign to hear our petitions of bliss,
Though we frame each a first, our joint second is this,
In the sweet-flowing waters of Coquet to stand,—
With the creel on the back, and the rod in the hand.

The Coquet-dale Fishing Songs, 1825.

The River *Wansbeck* is a good stream ; but
it is very seldom that fly-fishers like to angle
in it, on account of its banks being covered so
densely with wood. To fish this river properly,
the sportsman must be an adept at *chucking* the
fly under bushes and branches of trees ; for

there are not certainly more than six or eight good and open spots from its source to its mouth, a distance of nearly twenty miles. Its banks for a great distance rise precipitately to the height of two hundred feet above the bed of the river; composed of bold and rugged rocks, and covered with the oak and the mountain-ash. There is some of the finest river scenery in England along its banks; and it was a favourite angling-spot of the celebrated poet Akenside, who composed a great part of his immortal work, "The Pleasures of Imagination," in these sublime and retired privacies; and he often bears witness to the outpourings of his lofty and poetic muse —

"On solitary Wansbeck's rocky bed."

A short distance above the town of Morpeth the river is divided into two branches, at Mitford Castle; some of the remains of which are still preserved, bearing the date of the eleventh century. The trout in these separate branches are different from each other in colour, quality, and size. The one branch is called the south, and the other the north river. The south is the better stream, both for quantity and size of fish; but portions of it are preserved, and this materially curtails the range of fishable ground.

At a place called Angerton Meadows the river assumes a new aspect; runs into deep and sedgy pools, and is more suitable for the minnow or the worm than for fly. There is a small rivulet, called the *Hart*, running into this south river at Hartburn; and when there has been a little fresh in the former, a good dish of trout may be obtained.

There are no preserves of any consequence on the north river. It has generally a very rocky bed; runs into deep gullies; and its banks are covered with almost impenetrable woods, and elevated, in some cases, two hundred feet above the stream. Unless a person can wade, it would be scarcely possible to fish here to any advantage. A short rod and short line are also necessary. If, however, the angler has resolution to ascend the stream, he will find some of the most wild and romantic scenery that the north of England can produce. Everything about this spot has a charm and freshness, calculated to impart the most delightful emotions to a lover of external nature.

The flies requisite for the north river should be small, and the tackle light. The red and black palmers are the best.

The most eligible route to take, to angle this river with comfort and success, is to go from

Morpeth direct to Stanton Mill, a distance of six miles, and fish down the stream. The traveller will here pass through the most romantic and picturesque sections of this interesting spot.

In the still parts of the stream most excellent shade-fishing will be found. In the hottest and clearest days of summer, a dish of fine trout may be obtained, with the small red worm and a short rod and line.

The most successful flies for the south river are the red and black body, with grey, woodcock, or turkey wing. They should be two sizes larger than those used in the north stream.

The best part of the Wansbeck is that situated below the town of Morpeth; it is, however, covered with wood nearly throughout its whole course to the ocean. There are fine large trout in it, and of the finest quality: a dozen or eighteen fish make a dish of a very imposing appearance. The angler should avail himself of the pieces of still water where there is a curl upon them; for here all the fine, large, and rich fish are to be found.

Minnow-fishing has, of late years, been very successfully followed in the Wansbeck. Some beautiful fish are caught every season with this bait by C. Shaftoe, Esq., an enthusiastic and

expert angler, who uses it only with a single hook.

• There are a few salmon in the Wansbeck ; but the bed of the river, being almost entirely composed of freestone, is not adapted for the propagation of this fish.

The scenery by the river side from Morpeth to Bothal Castle is the most picturesque in the north of England. There are two woods skirting the sides of the stream for three or four miles. They are composed mostly of oak timber of natural growth, and are both about the same breadth, occupying the rugged and rocky banks to the extent of one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards. These woods are almost inaccessible, arising from the steep and precipitous nature of the ground, which towers above the bed of the river in some parts fully two hundred feet. Both banks are one continued body of freestone, which, almost every winter, crumbles down in detached fragments into the stream beneath, leaving abrupt prominences of rock, whose edges are covered with the elm and mountain-ash ; affording a secure habitation for the raven, the owl, and other birds of prey, which retire from the intrusion of man. A visit to these woods on a fine morning in April or May, when the air is filled with the notes of thousands

of rival songsters, is one of the most delightful pleasures which a mind imbued with a love of external nature can feel. The melancholy cooing of the wild pigeon, the murmurings of the stream breaking over some rugged part of its bed, and the shrill shriek of the jay, fall at once upon the ear, and fill the mind with a sort of tender and solitary cheerfulness.

Near to the place called Dove-cot Mill, the view upon the banks of the stream is very interesting. A few hundred yards above this spot there are some fine rushing streams full of trout; and when we turn to the left, we find the scenery open upon us in commanding beauty. The river itself becomes a very striking object of admiration. You no longer see its continuous course as before, over a broader bed, amid fragments of rock, all too much alike; but you see the river partially: here, in most beautiful and varied falls; there, in deep pools, edged with moving white lines; and beyond, the whole bed is intersected with the richest foliage of large trees, meeting, as it were, from bank to bank, through whose branches here and there a bright streak indicates the course of the water. When you take your stand upon a rising piece of ground, and look at the rushing streams in succession, the effect is magical; and we can no

longer wonder that in the fabulous spirit of ancient poetry the heathen mythology admitted the semi-deified personification of rivers.

The river *Blyth* is situated about six miles from the Wansbeck, on the Morpeth and Newcastle road. It has the richest trout I ever tasted in my life, but they are very few in number. It is considered a fair day's sport to obtain three or four. They are generally above the average size, and are more readily taken with minnow than with fly; indeed, the river, for want of streams, and from its still and sedgy nature, is but ill-adapted for this mode of angling. There are numerous and large pike in the river; and this circumstance, together with the nature of the water, is sufficient to account for the small number of trout found in this stream.

The *Tyne* is a noble river; and in former times used to be celebrated for the quantity and quality of its salmon. In some of the incorporated trades of Newcastle, it was, in the olden time, a condition in the indentures of apprentices that they should not be compelled to eat salmon more than three or four times a week. This shows that these fish must have been very common in those days; now, however, it is very rare indeed to meet with a salmon in the Tyne.

The Tyne is not a good angling river until you go about thirty miles from its mouth to Hexham. A little above this place it separates into two divisions ; the one called the South, and the other the North Tyne.

The river *Reed*, which runs into *North Tyne*, is an excellent river for trout. It flows through a wild and hilly country. Its bed is very rocky ; and its waters frequently are forced through chasms of rock, which create deep eddies or whirlpools, very suitable for minnow fishing. The best locality for traversing the stream is to commence about four or five miles above Otterbourne, where the famous battle was fought, and descend the stream until it falls into North Tyne. This will prove a pleasant and successful range of water ; and if the weather is even tolerable, there is no fear of a fair portion of sport.

The sportsman will meet with long stripes of still water in sections of the Reed ; but there are but few trout in them. They mostly have a clayey or spongy bed. All the expert anglers in the neighbourhood affirm that they have seldom, if ever, known many fish taken out of these sluggish running waters, either with bait or fly. This testimony from experience is, in all cases, a good guide to travelling sportsmen.

All kinds of flies are indifferently used in the Reed ; but as far as I have been able to judge, both from my own experience as well as that of others, light-coloured ones have, in the majority of cases, a decided preference. The tackle should be rather light and fine for this stream ; particularly for the upper parts of it, where it becomes very shallow and limpid.

South Tyne : — this river is of no importance whatever. There are scarcely any fish in it, on account of lead mines which are wrought along its banks ; these pour noxious ingredients into the stream, which destroy everything possessed of animal existence.

North Tyne is, however, a most splendid stream ; both for the number of its trout and the picturesque nature of its scenery. There an angler of ordinary skill will obtain his ten or fifteen dozen of trout a-day, with comparative ease. They are also of very good quality. The further up the river, the more numerous though smaller they become. The bed of the water is rocky and pebbly ; and there are many fine, strong, gurgling streams fit for the minnow, where large trout commonly take shelter. The portions of deep and still water in this stream are full of fish ; and if there be a good breeze, the angler will find he will obtain a greater

weight of trout here, than in keeping entirely by the stream. Winged flies are more suitable for this river than the palmers. The wings should stand well apart, taper finely at their extremities, and retain their shape in the water. Colour is not so much an object as size. They ought not to be too large.

Before closing these remarks on the rivers of the North of England, we shall insert an old provincial song, containing "*Hints to North Country Anglers in Choosing a Wife.*"

Northumberland lads, who use the gads,
And female affiance must share ;
If you wish to wed, betroth to bed,
One culled with caution and care.

Knight of the flee, give ear to me,
The country I've scann'd around ;
So, from the mass, select a lass,
Where beauties and virtues abound.

The lasses of *Tweed* are daft indeed,
Their garlands give such grace ;
The lasses of *Till*, are sprightly still,
In figure, and fashion, and face.

The lasses of *Bremish*, look rather squeamish,
Embellished with elegant ease ;
The lasses of *Ale*, for plumage prevail,
Their pomp and appendages please.

The lasses of *Aln*, obey fashion's call, when
 A princess prescribes a new dress ;
 The lasses of *Reed*, each hair-braids her head,
 And apes *a-la-mode* to excess.

The lasses of *Wansbeck*, like dignified dames deck,
 And their address quite *debonair* ;
 The lasses of *Font*, though pronounced paramount,
 Can scarce with these comets compare.

The lasses of *Pont*, to decorate don't
 Soar yet in the sphere of extremes ;
 The lasses of *Erring*, on fashions conferring,
 The decent most dext'rous deem.

The lasses of *Tyne*, who peerless shine,
 Are mirrors of modesty too ;
 The lasses of *Coquet*, put all in their pocket ;
 Go all to the *Coquet* and woo.

So take my advice, in fishing so nice,
 These provident paragons view ;
 So splendid and pretty, so worthy and witty,
 You 'll never have reason to rue.



CHAPTER VI.

The Rivers of Derbyshire.

THIS is a first-rate English county for angling. The hilly nature of the country gives rise to rapid and limpid waters, and these are the true elements for the salmon and trout. Fine and bold scenery is also a necessary accompaniment of this physical elevation; and we accordingly find that all authors on angling who have visited this part of England, speak in the most rapturous terms of the beautiful views to be witnessed on the banks of nearly all the rivers in this county. The principal of these are the *Trent*, the *Erewash*, the *Blyth*, the *Tame*, the *Dove*, the *Derwent*, the *Manifold*, and the *Wye*.

The *Trent* we shall pass over as an angling river, particularly in this locality, where it presents many features which are opposed to the standard maxims of the piscatory art.

The *Erewash* takes its rise from near Mansfield, and in its course divides the counties of Derby and Nottingham. It falls into the Trent a little below Shardlow-Bridge. The higher parts of this stream are the best adapted for the fly ; though the trout are generally considerably smaller than in those parts of its waters which are situated a little above its junction with the Trent. Middle-sized winged flies are the best suited to this river, and seem to be preferred to hackles or palmers. In its deep waters fine large trout are occasionally caught with minnow, after a summer freshet.

The *Blyth* takes its origin a few miles eastward from the Trent, which it falls into at King's-Bromley. It is a good stream, even of itself, and it improves after having received the waters of the Soar, from Eccleshall, and the Peak, from Penkridge. The trout are not, however, of a very rich flavour. I saw one of three pounds and a half, which cut up very white indeed, though this was in the month of June.

The *Tame* comes from near Coleshill, in Warwickshire, and joins the Trent above Burton. There are fine trout-streams in the Tame ; and when the season is not too dry, or too far advanced, fair sport may be anticipated.

The minnow does some execution here, after a summer freshet, just when the waters are assuming a fine ale colour. The starling and woodcock's wing, and red-body, are good flies.

The *Dove* springs from the Peak of Derbyshire, and divides this county from Staffordshire. It has been deservedly celebrated by Walton, and Cotton, who were frequently in the habit of roaming along its very picturesque banks. The latter ingenious and enthusiastic angler has the following lines on this river :—

“ Such streams Rome's yellow Tiber cannot show,
 The Iberian Tagus, or Ligurian Po ;
 The Meuse, the Danube, and the Rhine,
 Are puddle-waters all, compared with thine ;
 The Loire's pure streams yet too polluted are,
 With thine, much purer, to compare ;
 The rapid Garonne, and the winding Seine,
 Are both too mean,
 Beloved Dove, with thee
 To vie priority ;
 Nay, Tame and Isis, when conjoined, submit,
 And lay their trophies at thy silver feet.”

The river Dove, take it as a whole, is one of the most beautiful and interesting pieces of water that can be found in any country. The charms of its landscapes are quite ravishing and ecstatic. When we pass along the comparatively naked portion of the stream, we feel delight from the sweet music of its tumbling streams,

and the rushing brilliancy of their course. Here and there we have long glassy sheets or pools; in which everything is reflected with remarkable distinctness and correctness of outline. Now, again, we have a rapid, rushing, boisterous, and impetuous stream, dashing against some huge rock, grotesquely scattered over its bed, and supporting, in diverse places, the ash, the slender willow, and the birch. These are seen occasionally ornamented with festoons of honeysuckles and wild roses, which oftentimes dip their beauties in the rippling and transparent waters. Everything has a seductive and fairy charm about it. The huge blocks of stone, covered with the moss of ages, the bubbling and boiling eddies of the waters, the aquatic plants and flowers every way profusely strewn on the edges of the stream, aided by the solemnity and silence of all around, impart to the mind of the angler some of those delicious trains of thought, which all, who have practised his admirable art, and have been able to give utterance to their inward thoughts, have uniformly attributed to the heart-stirring and innate power of his fascinating and contemplative recreation.

The Dove abounds with graylings, both of excellent quality and large size. Some have

been taken, four pounds in weight. Hackles and palmer flies are the best for this river, especially in summer. In the spring, from March to the end of April, winged flies are very suitable.

The town of Ashbourn is pleasantly situated on the left bank of the Dove, and commands a fine view of the valley through which it flows, and which presents some of the most luxuriant meadows in the kingdom. This town was the scene of some of the contests between Charles I. and his Parliament.

Dove-Dale has been, from time immemorial, a subject of admiration and eulogy among all lovers of fine scenery. The river Dove springs out of Axe Edge, one of the lofty range of hills on the north-west border of Derbyshire. From its source to its entrance into the Trent it forms the boundary line between this county and Staffordshire. For some distance from its rise, the stream presents a winding and circuitous route over a limestone stratum and that portion of the county which is properly called Dove-dale, to a space of little more than two miles, lying about four miles north-west of Ashbourn.

If we enter the Dale by the north of Thorpe Cloud, a lofty hill, with an interesting-looking village at its base, we shall obtain some delight-

ful views of the county. There is a singular character of wild simplicity about it, which makes a deep impression on the feelings, and brings up to the surface the contemplative and reflective powers, those vague and shadowy abstractions which most men have of vacuity and chaos. We stand and gaze, almost without the faculty of either utterance or active thought. After, however, the first sensation is past, we begin to scan the landscape, as if it were, by piece-meal, and to detect and define the individual beauties of which the whole is composed. The eye fixes itself upon patches of furze and aged thorns, scattered over the edges of the Dale, and then traces out the glassy stream as it meanders through the naked and desolate-looking scene. As we move forward, the Dale assumes a deeper and more concentrated aspect, and appears completely hemmed in near a locality called Sharplo, which rises very abruptly from the edge of the waters. Here the stream becomes extremely imposing. On the left of the river, groups of naked and pinnacled-shaped rocks, shivered as it were into a thousand blocks by the lightings of heaven, lie scattered about in every direction, and in every fantastical and conceivable position. Here and there their naked and cold surfaces are clad with

ivy and lichens, the emblems of past ages and ancient days. Turning round to the right, these masses of rock take a circular sweep, and arrange themselves in a bold, lofty, and continuous pile; and on their extreme edges and jutting peaks, various mountain shrubs spread forth their branches, as if to give a nodding recognition of welcome to the admiring traveller. The yew tree and the wild pear conspicuously attract attention: the former of which reminds one, by various mental associations, of the decay of nature, and the end of our own fleeting and transitory existence.

Leaving this spot, we turn down a foot-path thickly studded with old thorn-bushes, ash, and underwood of various kinds; passing, on the right, a conspicuous-looking cluster of rocks, called Tissington Spires, which run a considerable distance up the Dale side, forming narrow ravines, which give a remarkable sombre cast to the whole scene. On the opposite side of the river the eye is arrested by the singular looking pile called Dove-Dale church, which is by no means an inappropriate designation, inasmuch as the general feature presents the outlines of such a holy sanctuary. Here local tradition is fertile on the supernatural appearances which have, from time immemorial, been

witnessed in this portion of the Dale. We have numerous accounts of the return of murdered spirits, and of other strange sights; the only testimonies of the scenes of conflicts and barbarity which, in former ages, were in all probability perpetrated in these dark and then inhospitable wilds. A few hundred yards more in a forward direction brings us to a place called Reynard's Cave, which we approach by a naturally-formed archway of rocks, about twenty feet wide, and nearly double the height; constituting a regular perforation of the solid mass of stone. The appearance of this archway is singular, and in passing through it the mind feels a train of odd sensations and reflections. We are ushered into what are termed Reynard's Hall, and Reynard's Kitchen, both of which are terminated by narrow and impassable rents or fissures. The *peep* down the river is romantic and imposing; particularly where its waters play around the two small verdant isles which obstruct its bed, and break the rapid current of its streams.

When we come to "Ham Stone" or "The Pickering Tor," we obtain another very interesting view of Dove-Dale. This bold rock rises perpendicularly from the edge of the river; and if we cast a glance on the opposite or

Derbyshire side, we recognise a remarkable cluster of rocks, with irregular surfaces, and somewhat cone-shaped. Here we perceive some great masses of stone, just hanging as it were by a thread; and we are filled with wonder that the rude blasts of by-gone winters have not, long ere this, hurled them into the abyss below. One of these singular masses is called the "Watch-box," and has a very grotesque appearance. We see the river from this spot winding its way very tranquilly among the hazel bushes, briars, and stunted willows which deck its banks.

Both the Staffordshire and Derbyshire sides of the river have their separate and distinct beauties of this singular Vale. The tourist and the angler will find, however, the latter country the most convenient, as it is always open to the public; whereas that on the Staffordshire side is only accessible, for rambling or piscatory purposes, from leave being granted at the "Isaac Walton," at Ham. But the best method of seeing all the lovely views of Dove-Dale is to shun all the beaten tracts, and plunge at once into its hidden and unfrequented nooks and corners, and climb its steep and towering peaks. An intelligent angler, with his mind susceptible of impressions from nature's works, will find this

the best mode of steeping his spirit in the deep solitudes of her interesting and wide domains.

There are some spots in this part of Derbyshire interesting to the angler who has a taste for the fine arts. Ham Hall is the seat of Jesse Watts Russell, Esq., and is built in the Tudor style of architecture. The landscape around is beautiful. The gallery of paintings comprehends some of the works of Romney, Gainsborough, Northcote, Stothard, Wilson, Shee, Turner, Owen, Howard, Landseer, with some foreign pictures of name and reputation. In the old village church there is a monumental group in white marble, by Sir Francis Chantrey, worthy of notice. In the centre of the village is a work of great art, a gothic stone cross, which bears an inscription to the memory of a lady. This displays great taste, and a due appreciation of the highest principles of art.

The *Derwent* rises from the hilly parts of Derbyshire, and runs through many beautiful vales, with their princely mansions, and the towns of Baslow, Matlock, Belper, Darley, and Derby, and then joins the Trent a short distance from Shardlow-Bridge.

There are a great number of angling stations on this river; Baslow, Rowsley-Bridge, and Matlock are the principal. Beautiful water and

good sport will be found at all these places. The river below Matlock is not so good as that above it. But I have known anglers with minnow prefer the lower portions of the stream to the higher, on account of the large fish found in the former locality.

I would advise all anglers to provide themselves with a good stock of flies, when they visit the rivers of Derbyshire. Considerable variety, both as to colour and size, is required, from the clearness of the waters,—the interruption given to the currents of air by the winding and elevated nature of the banks of the streams,—and the fluctuations in the volume of water, from dryness or moisture. All these matters have a practical effect upon the sportsman's success. Speaking with considerable qualification, large flies do not suit the rivers in this county. They ought to be mostly small; and the tackle generally cannot be too fine.—These remarks have a special reference to the Derwent.

The whole course of this river is about sixty-five miles. "In the space of forty miles," says a writer, "which includes the whole course of this river from the highest and wildest part of the Peak to the town of Derby, scenery more richly diversified with beauty can hardly anywhere be found. Generally, its banks are

luxuriantly wooded ; the oak, the elm, the alder, and the ash flourish abundantly along its course ; beneath the shade of whose united branches the Derwent is sometimes secluded from the eye of the traveller, and becomes a companion for the ear alone ; then, suddenly emerging into day, it spreads through a more open valley, or winding round some huge mountain or rocky precipice, reflects their dark sides as it glides beneath. Sometimes this ever-varying and ever-pleasing stream precipitates its foaming waters over the rugged projections and rocky fragments that interrupt its way : again the ruffled waves subside, and the current steals smoothly and gently through the vale, clear and almost imperceptible in motion."

The *Manifold* is a good trout-stream. Its waters are remarkably limpid, and they require fine tackle and a light hand to deceive their inhabitants. This river flows into the Dove.

The *Wye* flows out of the hills in the neighbourhood of Buxton. It then runs down to Monsal-dale, the village of Ashford-in-the-Water, to Bakewell, and through the grounds of Haddon Hall, the property of the Duke of Rutland. At a short distance from Haddon the Wye is joined by the stream called *Lathkill*, on which a recent tourist makes the following observations :—

“Near Over-Haddon is the source of the Lathkill, one of the most brilliant streams that play among the dells of Derbyshire. The cradle of this rivulet is pleasingly romantic: from a cavern in a mass of broken rock, whose sides and summits are adorned with branches of trees, the Lathkill issues into day; and running down a gentle declivity, amongst huge stones, by which it is divided into separate currents, it is sometimes an object of considerable beauty.”

The environs of Buxton, as most travellers know, abound with natural curiosities and delightful scenery. On the Bakewell road we meet with lofty perpendicular rocks, which form, as it were, strong bulwarks to the valley of the Wye, and impart to it those interesting and romantic feelings with which most visitors and anglers on the river are inspired. At a short distance from the town, in a different direction, we fall in with those curious limestone-quarries which have for long excited the attention of strangers. “Pool’s Hole” is a cavern of considerable dimensions in the rock, somewhat contracted at its entrance, but more spacious in its inner courts. Stalactites profusely cover its roof and sides; and towards its centre it contracts; but a little beyond, it again becomes

wide and spacious. There is a huge column called "The Queen of Scots"—from a tradition that she once stopped at this point. The whole length of the cavern is 560 yards. The dwelling-houses on the side of the mountain seem to be excavated out of the *débris* of the lime-kilns. "Diamond Hill" is a spot which furnishes specimens of quartz, of hexagonal shape, and which are known by the name of "Buxton diamonds."

If we want to give an opinion as to the skill of the various anglers in the English counties, we should, without hesitation, award the palm for fly-fishing to Derbyshire. In no part of the country, indeed, have we met with men more careful in the arrangement of their tackle, or so successful in the use of it. They seem to be aware of the fact, that it is not the strength and clumsiness of the tackle, but the skill in the use of it, which must achieve the victory. That the maxim is a correct one, we do not doubt for a moment; and our own experience has proved beyond dispute, that in *clear streams you cannot fish too fine*. Often have we killed several brace of trout and grayling with the smallest blue and yellow duns; while others, using coarser materials, have in the same river failed utterly.

Before concluding, we shall make a remark or two on general matters connected with the angling of the Derbyshire streams. These shall be guided solely by our own personal experience and observation. As we know that anglers have often opinions and systems of their own, which are clothed with infallibility, we shall not deliver our counsels with anything like a dogmatical air.

We have always found short lines advantageous in these waters. The cast line and gut, with flies on, should never exceed the length of the rod. The narrow span of the river requires this arrangement, in order to throw a light and steady fly on the surface of those bright and glassy waters. We have often seen the want of sport consequent on a disregard of this precaution. Again, an angler must have a *practised eye* relative to the haunts of fish in these rivers. This is of mighty importance; but it is one of those habits which nothing save the closest and most accurate observations will enable the angler to form. When once possessed, however, it is invaluable. And lastly, we would just remark, that a light mode of *skewing* the line is often useful, where the gushes and streams of air are so irregular and opposite. The same mode of throwing a line suited to the Tweed would be

highly ludicrous and preposterous here. Short lines greatly facilitate the acquirement of this branch of fly-fishing.



CHAPTER VII.

The Rivers of Durham, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire.

THE county of DURHAM has but two rivers of any considerable extent and volume, namely, the *Wear*, and the *Tees*. There is good angling, however, in both, but we must make our way to their higher waters before we reach really good and pleasant fly-fishing streams.

The *Wear* rises out of a range of high mountains on the borders of Cumberland, and for several miles from its first springs, pursues its path through a singularly wild and romantic district. To a stranger from the comparatively level and luxuriant counties of the south of England, nothing can be more striking and impressive than a tour on the banks of this river, for the first twenty miles of

its course. The traveller winds round one mountain after another, and traverses one desolate tract of moor-land after another, which produce in the mind a feeling of loneliness, solemnity, and awe. The river seems like a delicate silver thread, making its way to the eastward through masses of abrupt rocks, variegated with fragments and ruins, which appear ready to fall on his head, and crush him to pieces.

From Bishop-Auckland to its source, the Wear receives the following feeders: *Lyn Burn*, *Red Burn*, *Wascrop Burn*, the *Shittlehope*, the *Stanhope*, *Horsley Burn*, the *Westhope*, the *Swinhope*, the *Middlehope*, and the *Bookhope*. In all these smaller waters, there is good fishing after summer rains; and we have known eight and ten dozen of fine trout caught in them, in a very few hours. They generally, however, run small, and their quality is by no means first-rate. When the waters are pretty full, and of a deep *ale-colour*, the minnow proves very successful.

The Wear itself is the chief place for fly-fishing. All kinds of colours are here used by the craft. The wind, and the state of the waters, must guide the sportsman to fix his choice.

From Bishop-Auckland to Durham, the river increases considerably in size; and the trout, if

not more numerous than in the higher departments of the stream, are at least considerably larger, lower down. But below the city of Durham, it becomes not so pleasant and commandable a river for the angler, as higher up towards its source. Large fish are, however, sometimes taken in the lower districts of the water, particularly by the minnow, which is a good bait in many sections of the stream, even down to the tide-way.

YORKSHIRE, though a very large county, is not a very eligible district for the angler. The most part of its waters are injured for the sportsman by the various manufactures which are placed on the banks of its several streams and rivers. This is particularly the case with those which flow through the West Riding, and which are occupied, from their remotest springs, as a moving power to mills of various kinds.

In the northern division of the county, the case is somewhat different. There are here angling districts worthy of a visit. The upper waters of the *Derwent*, above Malton, abound with trout; and the several feeders which enter into it, the *Dove*, the *Hodgebeck*, the *Costin*, the *Severn*, the *Rical*, and the *Black River*, are streams which will, at the early part of the

season, yield some sport. The most of them are better adapted for bait-fishing, than for fly.

The *Swale*, in its higher departments, is a good water. It arises out of mountainous grounds east of Kirby-Stephen; and, in the course of ten or twelve miles, receives several smaller tributaries, which materially augment its bulk, and make it better fitted for fly. Eight and ten dozen of good-sized fish are not unfrequently taken here in a few hours, when the water is in good order. Catterick Bridge is an excellent fishing-station for the Swale. The *Whiske* is a small stream which rises near to Osmotherly, and falls into this river. The Swale joins the *Ure* at Myton. These united waters then continue their course to about six miles below Boroughbridge, where they assume the name of the *Ouse*.

The river *Nid* rises in Netherdale, passes by Knaresborough, and falls into the Ouse at Nun-Monkton. There have been some good fish taken out of the Nid, but it is not a stream of any note. The *Derwent* rises in the eastern moorlands in the North Riding, and runs parallel to the sea-coast by Ayton to the foot of the Wolds, then taking a westerly direction, and receiving the *Rye* at Hemsley, enters the Ouse at Barmby.

The higher sections of the *Ribble*, above Clitheroe, afford fair sport in the spring and autumn. From this town to Settle, the fishing is very good, and the country open and pleasant.

The *Don* springs from the wild and moorland district near Penniston, and being joined by the *Hadbeck*, and *Weute*, pours its waters into the Ouse. The *Foss* rises near Craike-Castle, and is a fishable stream in the early part of the season.

The *Wharfe* has a run of full thirty miles before it pours its waters into the Ouse, a short distance above Selby. This river takes its rise from the high lands near Mardile Moor, and before it reaches near to Knaresborough Forest, it is considerably increased by the accession of several smaller streams, in many of which a number of small trout are to be caught with worm. The professed anglers on the Wharfe give a decided preference to black and dun coloured flies, during the summer months; and lighter ones, in the spring months of March, April, and May.

Most of the rivers and streams which lie between Leeds and the borders of Lancashire and Westmorland, for a breadth of twenty miles, are of no importance or use to the angler. They are all poisoned with dyes and filth of every

sort. We need not, therefore, notice them further.

Some of the chief rivers of LANCASHIRE are rendered unfit for piscatory purposes, on account of the numerous manufacturing-establishments situated on their waters.

The *Lune* rises in the mountainous parts of Westmorland, and enters Lancashire at Kirby-Lonsdale. It receives the *Greta*, and the *Wenning*, in both of which there is a fair sprinkling of small trout, which can be obtained after summer freshets, either by worm or minnow.

There is good fishing in the *Lune*, take altogether, both for salmon and trout. The flies that are commonly used by the anglers on its banks, are chiefly winged ones, and of a lightish colour, particularly during the summer months, and after floods. The best districts of the *Lune* for the regular fly-fisher, are those which lie between Kirby-Lonsdale and Hornby, near which the *Wenning* enters. The streams are, in this locality, of twelve or fourteen miles extent, of the finest kind for agreeable sport, while the country scenery in every direction is pleasing and delightful.

The *Ribble*, rising in Yorkshire, flows through

the heart of Lancashire, and falls into the Irish Sea at Preston. The tide only flows up in it to this town. It abounds with fine salmon and trout; and the rod-fishing is on the whole respectable. Good stocks of flies, suitable for the waters, are to be had at Preston; and a few miles beyond the confines of the town, we get to good angling streams.

The *Darwen*, and the *Savock*, are two of the chief tributaries of the Ribble; and there are a few trout in both of them.

Spearing for salmon sometimes takes place in the higher parts of the Ribble, at particular seasons of the year, when the water is low and clear, and weather warm. This sport, by torch-light, is attended with jovial festivities. The following song was sung on one of these piscatory gatherings:—

A Song.*

Here 's a bumper to rod and to spear!

A bumper to challenge a song!

A bumper to those, who, where'er the rill flows,

Are spearing and angling along!

'T is good to be steady and cool;

'T is better to dare than to doubt;

'T is best to keep clear of the snobs in the rear,

And be always thrown in than thrown out!

* A Parody, we think, made upon a Song in *Blackwood*.

Then hurrah for the rod and the spear !
 Hurrah for the zest of my song !
 Hurrah for all those, who, where'er the rill flows,
 Are spearing and angling along !

Here 's a cheer for the charms of the stream !
 A cheer for a glorious burst !
 And who would n't cheer, when the bold throw the spear,
 For the fearless are always the first.
 There are some ever in the right place ;
 There are some who just fuddle and sot ;
 There are many who love every danger to face,
 And many, I swear, who do not !
 Then hurrah for the rod and the spear !
 Hurrah for the zest of my song !
 Hurrah for all those, who, where'er the rill flows,
 Are spearing and angling along !

There 's a joy when the fish makes his rush,
 There 's a joy when the monster first bleeds ;
 There 's a joy, though *to-day* has now glided away,
 For to-morrow shall double our deeds ;
 Here 's a sigh for the anglers afar,
 A welcome to those who are here ;
 A health to the whole, who, in spirit and soul,
 Are friends to the rod and the spear !
 Then hurrah for the rod and the spear !
 Hurrah for a jovial song !
 Hurrah for all those, who, where'er the rill flows,
 Are spearing and angling along !

The rivers of CHESHIRE afford good sport.
 The *Dee* in particular is a favourite, both for
 salmon and trout. Its higher waters belong,
 however, to Denbigh and Flint shires.

The *Wever* runs through the chief districts

of the county, and has a great number of tributaries, in most of which there is good angling, most part of the season. The chief of these are — the *Peover*, the *Croke*, and the *Walvarn*.



CHAPTER VIII.

The Rivers and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmorland.

ALL the rivers and lakes in these two English counties possess fishing capabilities of the first order, besides presenting to the tourist scenery of the most agreeable and romantic kind.

The general aspect of CUMBERLAND is irregular and broken. The south-western portions of it exhibit a gigantic combination of rugged mountains, thrown together in promiscuous confusion, but enclosing many beautiful and fertile valleys. It is from these high grounds that the principal rivers in the county take their rise. The chief of these are—the *Eden*, the *Eamont*, the *Duddon*, the *Ehen*, the *Derwent*, the *Greata*, the *Cocker*, the *Ellen*, the *Weaver*, the *Wampool*, the *Caldew*, the *Peterel*,

the *Esk*, the *Liddal*, the *Line* or *Leven*, the *Irthing*, and the *Gelt*.

The *Eden*.—This river is one of the most important in the county. It takes its rise in the moors of Westmorland, close upon the borders of Yorkshire. It enters Cumberland near its junction with the *Eamont*, and, taking a north-westerly direction, and passing Kirkoswald and Carlisle, flows into the Solway Frith, near Rockcliff March.

The Eden is one of the finest angling rivers in the north of England, both for trout and salmon; and to fish its waters properly, Penrith, (distant from it about five miles) Kirkoswald, and Carlisle, are the most convenient and suitable stations for the tourist. The last-mentioned town is well supplied with all kinds of hooks, flies, and lines; and, among its sporting inhabitants, some of the most skilful disciples of "Isaac" will here be found, who are noted for their kindness and urbanity to strangers, in giving them every information as to the best localities for sport on the various rivers in the neighbourhood.

I have seen nearly all kinds of flies used on the Eden, with comparatively equal success. As a general rule, however, it will be found that, as you ascend to the higher portions of

its waters, lightest-coloured flies are the most killing. In hot and clear weather, the flies should be small, and the gut fine; for they are extremely clear and limpid, and demand a light and skilful hand from the angler.

The *Eamont*. — This stream takes its rise from Ullswater Lake, near to Pooley-Bridge, and proceeds, in a south-easterly direction, through an interesting wooded vale, to the Eden, into which it falls near to Carlton. If the angler is at Penrith, he can readily reach some of the best spots of the Eamont by walking a few miles. It is a first-rate trout-stream, especially after a summer freshet. The trout are rich, and of good size. When the water is in suitable trim, minnow is often used with deadly effect. So likewise is the salmon-roe, in the back-end of the year.

The *Duddon*. — The Duddon forms the boundary between Cumberland and a part of the county of Lancashire. It takes its origin from the moors near Westmorland. It abounds with fine salmon and trout, and is a beautiful stream for the angler, particularly in the months of April and May.

The *Ehen*. — This river springs from the high hills near Borrowdale, and has a run of about twenty miles. It forms itself into a lake

called *Ennerdale Water*, and then proceeds, through the pleasant and fertile valleys of Ennerdale and Kenniside, to Egremont, and then runs through a very flat district till it reaches the sea. There are some charming fishing-waters in this stream, and the trout are commonly of good size, and of a rich and delicate flavour. Light-coloured flies are the most successful. The minnow, after a flood in summer, is a good bait.

The *Derwent*. — This river flows from the mountainous districts of Borrowdale, and running along the hills called Derwent Fells, forms a lake, bearing its name; at the north end of which stands the town of Keswick. From thence the Derwent flows through the centre of the country, and, passing by Cockermouth, falls into the Irish Sea near the small market-town called Workington. The river has a range of full thirty miles, and there are many fine angling localities in its course. The fish take here often with remarkable greediness. I have known a large basket completely filled in a very few hours. At other times, however, they seem to have long sulky fits, very apt to damp the ardour of enthusiastic sportsmen.

The *Greata*. — This stream is formed by the junction of two small rivers, called by some

Glendora and *Bure*; the former springing out of a lofty district called Saddleback, and the other rising near Dunmailraise. These united waters pass Keswick, and fall into the Derwent. There is excellent sport in these streams in the early part of the fly-fishing season. In hot and dry seasons, they afford but a very scanty supply of sport. The red and black palmer flies are great favourites with some experienced anglers on these waters.

The *Cocker*.—The Cocker rises in a mountain near the black-lead mines, and after flowing through the lakes of Buttermere and Crummuck, continues its progress northward, dividing the vale of Lorton; and after leaving the mountains, and pursuing its course through a more open and fertile district, falls into the river Derwent at Cockermouth. The Cocker is considered a fair river for trout, although they do not run large, neither are they of a very rich flavour. Some very large trout have occasionally been met with here, but these have almost always been obtained by minnow, and after a freshet in the summer months.

The *Ellen*.—This is a small stream, and springs out of Coldbeck Fells. It receives several tributaries, which are so small, however, that to fish them well, bait must be used. They

are full of small trout, and a good deal of sport may be obtained from them after a day's rain in the summer months. The Ellen forms the western boundary of the Derwent, passes Udale and Ireby, and flowing, in a western direction, through an open vale of considerable beauty, falls into the sea at Maryport. The main stream has a high character among many expert fly-fishers.

The *Weaver* and the *Wampool*.—Both these angling waters take their rise from among the high moor-grounds near to Brocklebank. The former, after passing through a low tract of country, falls into the sandy estuary of the Wampool, which flows more eastward, and at length carries its waters to the Solway Frith. The fishing-ground is not of any great moment to the tourist; the fish in both these streams are but small, and by no means very numerous.

The *Caldew*.—This is a good fishing-stream, and it takes its rise from the south side of Skiddaw, one of the loftiest peaks in England. The river has several feeders, in all of which good trout may be caught in abundance after rain, with worm. We have known fine baskets of trout caught in these small waters at such seasonable times. The Caldew runs through a wild and barren tract of land until it comes into

the vicinity of Carlisle, where it mingles its waters with those of the Eden.

The *Peterel*.—This stream rises from the high ground a little to the east of Skiddaw, and has a northerly run till it reaches the Eden, a short distance from Carlisle. The Peterel has several feeders, which abound with great quantities of small trout.

Should the angler, in traversing these two streams, wish to pay a visit to the noble mountain, Skiddaw, he will be highly gratified. It is situated about three miles from Keswick, and is nearly four thousand feet above the level of the ocean. In taking his departure from this town, the tourist will pass through some bowery lanes, luxuriantly festooned with mountain ash, hollies, and a variety of beautiful shrubs, until he reaches a broad kind of table-land, from which a road leads to the foot of what is commonly called “Skiddaw’s Club,”—a large round hill, covered with turf and heath. A narrow path then opens, winding along steep and green precipices. Derwentwater soon appears, with its beautifully-enamelled banks, sunk deep amid a chaotic mass of mountains, and surrounded by vast ranges of moors or fells, not visible from below. On the other side, we recognise the cheerful lake of Bassenthwaite, stretching out

to its utmost limits. As we advance in a zig-zag direction, the lakes dwindle into the dimensions of ponds; while the wide range of the amphitheatre at our feet, rivets the attention, and engrosses every thought. Vast ranges of dark mountains, no longer individually great, but imparting the idea of sublimity from their aggregate accumulation, present themselves, and open out innumerable scenic avenues to the eye, which excite the wonder, and ravish the senses of the beholder. When the ascent is accomplished, and should the weather be fine, the view is remarkably grand and varied from the summit, —presenting, in fact, such a boundless landscape as never fades from the recollection of the traveller. It is one of the most wonderful and magnificent displays of which England can boast.

The *Esk*.—This river rises from high grounds in Scotland, and enters England near to Longtown, flowing through a rich and most beautiful vale. Its waters can be conveniently reached by way of Carlisle, the distance from which is about six miles. It abounds with salmon of fine quality. It is a most interesting stream for an angler.

“ Majestic o’er the steeps, with murmuring roar,
See winding Esk his rapid current pour ;

On the bright wave the sportive salmon play,
And bound and glisten in the noon-tide ray.

The *Liddal*.—This river, like the Esk, is of Scottish origin, and enters Cumberland at Kirs-hope Foot, where it receives a small feeder. After traversing a wild and romantic country, it falls into the Esk, not far from the English border. The trout of the Liddal are numerous, and of fair average size. The minnow is a good bait for many of its rapid and gushing streams, especially in the spring of the year, when the waters are pretty full, and not too clear.

The *Leven*.—This stream owes its source to several fountains or springs among the wild and gloomy hills of Nichol Forest and Bewcastle. The two chief branches of it, however, rise near Christenbury Crag. As they flow a few miles, they receive several other smaller tributaries, and at Stapleton Church, it is a pretty good-sized angling stream. After being augmented by several small brooks, it winds its course, in a very serpentine manner, through a very fine and interesting vale, until it forms a junction with the Esk, a few miles above the Solway Frith. There is good fishing in the Leven; and all kind of flies, if not too large, seem to be readily taken, when the waters are in suitable trim. Six

or seven dozen of trout is a common day's sport.

The *Irthing*.—Some call this the *Irving*. It rises from the wild and bleak hills which divide Cumberland from Northumberland, and, proceeding in a southerly direction, forms a boundary between the two counties for several miles. After winding round Spade Adam Waste, from whence it derives an increase to its volume from several feeders, it proceeds westerly towards the Eden, into which it pours its waters near Newby. This is a good stream for the fly, but chiefly in the early months of the fishing season. When its waters get low in dry and sultry years, it is of little use to visit its banks.

The *Gelt*.—This springs from Croglin Fell, and after passing through the district called Geltsdale Forest, and receiving the waters of the Castle-Carrook Beck, and another feeder from Talkingtarn, falls into the Irthing near Edmond Castle. The fishing in the Gelt is pretty good in the early part of the season.

The surface of the county of WESTMORLAND consists of lofty mountains, naked hills, and black barren moors. The climate is, however, bracing and healthy.

The river *Eden* traverses a large portion of

the northern division of the county. The best angling stations to reach its higher waters are Appleby, and Kirby-Stephen. At this latter town, the small river *Below* joins the Eden, and, after summer rains in particular, is a good trout-stream. The Eden itself will yield abundance of sport, for the streams, in the upper sections of the river, are peculiarly adapted for the fly. There cannot be a more agreeable ramble than to traverse its banks from Kirby-Stephen to the neighbourhood of Penrith.

The *Lone* or *Lune*, which enters Lancashire a short distance from Kirby-Lonsdale, is a good river, better for angling in Westmorland than in the neighbouring county. This stream rises in the high and barren districts, near to Grimthwate, and from there, for more than thirty miles, is an excellent river for light fly-fishing. It is an eligible locality at all times of the year; and nearly all sorts of flies are readily taken. We have known baskets well-filled from all kinds and colours of artificial baits. The country by its banks is, in many spots, particularly pleasing, and is capable of affording an agreeable exercise for the pencil of the artist.

The *Ken* or *Cam* flows by the town of Kendal, and springs from the mountains near Kenmere and Troutbeck. It has several

feeders in its higher departments, which are well-stocked with trout, though not of a large size.

The *Winster* flows from the lake of Windermere, and is a good fly-fishing stream. We have seen large trout taken in its streams after a fresh in summer, by trolling with minnow.

The streams *Brathy*, and *Ruthy*, in the neighbourhood of Ambleside, abound with trout; and both the fly and worm can be used with success.

The river *Burbeck* runs into the Lune, and is an excellent stream. It has a range of nearly fifteen miles before it joins the latter river.

The Lakes of Cumberland, all more or less capable of affording a fund of amusement to the angler, are — *Ulls-water*, *Derwent-water*, *Bassenthwaite-water*, *Over-water*, *Lowes-water*, *Crummock-water*, *Buttermere*, *Ennerdale-water*, *Wast-water*, and *Derock-water*. In addition to these, there are smaller lakes called “Tarns,” in some of which there are vast quantities of fish.

These lakes have been so often described, both by anglers and general tourists, that nothing new can be said about them. As our work is not an ordinary guide-book, but a manual for the rambling fly-fisher, we shall content ourselves with a very brief notice of these still waters in Cumberland and Westmorland.

Ulls-water, which is partly in both counties, is about eight miles, and abounds with fish of almost every kind. It is a favourite place for the angler. The views of its several localities are the most rich and picturesque imaginable.

Derwent-water is a splendid piece of lake scenery. It is inferior, in point of magnitude, to *Ulls-water*, but equal to it in beauty and delightful views. *Derwent-water* is said to be ten miles in circumference; it is as transparent as crystal, and shines and reflects like a mirror. The mountains which spring from its margin are lofty, partly covered with grass, and partly with heath, and shrubs and brushwood hang in graceful negligence and disorder over their apertures and creeks. On the right-hand side of the lake, retiring a little from its margin, which is clothed with herbage, we gain a splendid view of the little valley of Newland, which skirts around the foot of the hills, on which sheep and cattle are feeding. Cottages are likewise dotted down here and there, which add greatly to the beauty and interesting character of the landscape. In passing on to the rocky and barren promontory of Bank Park, there is a fine bay, from which a most delightful piece of landscape presents itself. The mountains rise here immediately out of the lake; some standing, as

it were, perpendicularly out of the water, and others falling back in wild confusion, piled heap upon heap from the convulsions of nature. No words can convey any adequate idea of the richness of the view; chiefly because the wild variety of objects presents the same outline of features—the mountains and rocks constituting one immense theatre. Where the hills are separated, little valleys filled with wood, or narrow winding dells of grass-ground, twist and curve themselves around their feet, and give the most enchanting effect to the entire scene. Mountain rises behind mountain, and rock behind rock, in fine perspective; and the whole brings to our minds the grand and unique pictures of Salvator Rosa.

Bassenthwaite-water, and *Over-water*, are pretty, as well as *Lows-water*, which is situated near the north-western extremity of the mountains, above Mellbreak. It is about a mile long, and a quarter of a mile broad. Its southern shore is bounded by lofty hills, which, in some parts, descend perpendicularly to the water's edge.

Crummock-water is situated near the skirts of the barren Mellbreak. It is four miles long, and about half a mile in breadth; and its waters are deep, clear, and abound with char. Its western banks are bordered with lofty and

romantic mountains, which impart to the whole scene an aspect of great sublimity. The other smaller waters or lakes, are all, more or less, interesting fishing-stations.

We may mention here, in addition, that the two lakes, *Coniston-water* and *Windermere*, which lie between Westmorland and Lancashire, are fine angling localities. Coniston-water is seven miles in extent, and three-quarters of a mile broad. The surrounding scenery is extremely interesting, and the fishing good. At the north-western extremity of the lake is the village of Coniston, behind which rise lofty and romantic hills, called Coniston Fells.

Windermere is the most extensive lake in the kingdom, and distinguished by the variety of beautiful prospects which it displays. Its extent is about fifteen miles, by about one in breadth. The greatest depth is two hundred feet, opposite Ecclefrig Crag. It is famous for its char, and abounds likewise with trout, perch, pike, and eels. It is intersected with promontories, and spotted with islands. Among these, the Holme, or Great Island, an oblong tract of thirty acres, crosses the lake in an oblique line, surrounded by a number of inferior isles, finely formed and wooded. They constitute a sort of archipelago. In sailing up the water, from the Great Island,

the extremity appears singularly grand, in parts singularly picturesque, and the view of the surrounding scenery, from Cove to Kirkston, is astonishingly sublime and beautiful.

Lines,

WRITTEN IN PENCIL, ON THE DOOR OF AN INN, IN ONE OF THE REMOTE
DISTRICTS OF WESTMORLAND (1846).

The dark grey of gloamin',
The lone leafy shaw,
The coo of the cushat,
The scent of the haw;
The brae of the burnie,
All decked out with flowers,
Where two kindred anglers,
Spent many sweet hours.

A flask of good whiskey,
Sandwiches and ale,
A smiling good housewife,
When our fishing doth fail;
With plenty of joking,
And singing, and fun,
Give zest to the sporting
With rod and the gun.

Ye, lost to all pleasure,
Whom avarice can move,
Ne'er to stir from your lairs,
Nor by streamlet to rove;
Away with your sorrows,
Away with your store,
Ye know not the pleasures
Of angling an hour.

To angle Cumberland and Westmorland well, and to make the tour of their rivers and lakes as pleasant and improving as possible, the sportsman should travel on foot,—just as the crow flies,—and not be solely guided in his movements by the principal towns in the vicinity of fishing waters. In following out this pedestrian plan, he will come in contact with the best localities for sport, besides visiting, under the most favourable circumstances, the most interesting places in point of scenery. If not over-fastidious in his habits of living, which no true angler should be, he will find all his reasonable and necessary wants richly supplied at most of the ordinary country villages, and inns on the way-side. There is a simplicity and apparent roughness in the ordinary mode of living in both counties, that may not be readily relished by an inhabitant of the southern counties of England; but a tourist will find the people remarkably hospitable, kind, and obliging, and ready at all times and seasons to aid him in any way that lies in their power.

Indeed, the state of society and the manners of the people, are themselves full of interest to a thoughtful mind. We see in those wild and secluded districts,—formed, as it were, by the mighty hand of chaos himself,—an uncorrupted,

independent, and single-minded class of men; occupying their own small estates, handed down to them from generation to generation; their mansions forming the central point of their respective lands, in which they lead an innocent and undisturbed mode of life, amidst their own paternal meads and native hills. Their artificial wants being but few, they live in a frugal and temperate manner. Removed from the glare and extravagances of fashionable life, their habits retain their simple and primitive character: their hospitality is unbounded; and their sentiments natural, cordial, and friendly. They will often say to the travelling angler, "Go to the vale on the other side of yon mountain, to the house of such an "Estatesman," and tell him you came from me,—I know him not; but he will receive you kindly, for *our sheep mingle upon the mountains.*"

There is something in traversing the wild and romantic districts of these two counties, which, like sweet music, excites a powerful and mysterious ecstasy over our ordinary sensations, and which, though very distinctly felt, cannot be adequately described. When the air is calm and serene, the faintest breeze hushed into silence, no sound save the limpid waters gurgling over the rocky bed of the river,

and the sun, perchance, just sunk beneath the golden clouds in the west ; there steals over the human soul a feeling of peace, and intellectual tranquillity, such as the mere worldling, struggling in the bustle and strife of a crowded city, has never experienced.



CHAPTER IX.

The Rivers of Rutlandshire, Warwickshire, and Somersetshire.

THE RIVERS OF RUTLANDSHIRE are but few, and of little importance to the angler. The *Gwash* or *Wash*, runs through the centre of the county, and falls into the Welland, below Stanford. The Wash has a run of about twenty-five miles, and in many parts of it, there is tolerable fishing, both with fly and bait. It receives several tributaries, in which small trout are to be found. The river Welland divides the county from Northamptonshire. This stream likewise receives the waters of several feeders on its Rutlandshire side, in which some good-sized trout are occasionally found. The *Wadeland*, which has a run of full fifteen miles, is one of these. It is good for worm-fishing in its

higher waters, about the vicinity of Ridlington and Lee Lodge.

The river *Avon* enters WARWICKSHIRE about twelve miles from its source. This is a large stream, having a run of nearly one hundred miles. It is navigable for above forty, to Stafford. The feeders or tributaries of this river are—the *Swift*, the *Sow*, the *Leam*, the *Dene*, the *Stour*, and the *Arrow*. The *Avon* and its dependent waters open up a wide range of angling country; and the sport is more or less indulged in by a number of people of all ranks of life throughout the county. In the higher localities of the *Avon*,—from Milverton to Rieton, or Woolston, the fly-fishing is good in the early part of the season; that is, during April and May. In all the smaller streams we have just enumerated there are more or less trout, though not generally large, though of very fair quality. We have often seen singular-coloured flies used by amateurs on the *Avon* and its dependencies. Many, in fact, that represent no insect in nature. Yet we have seen execution done with them, even when the waters were by no means in first-rate trim.

The *Blythe* has a run of eighteen miles, the *Bourne* of twenty-six, and the *Auker* twenty-eight. We have seen the minnow taken greedily

in these streams, in the summer months. There are many very interesting localities on the banks of these rivers; and a saunter along them, in fine weather, is indeed a rich treat.

SOMERSETSHIRE is well watered with angling streams, and those who follow the sport in this county are both numerous and skilful in the craft. The Avon, which we have just noticed, enters Somersetshire a little below Bradford. It is navigable to Bath. It receives the waters of the *Frome*, and *Midford Brook*, above this city; and a stream called the *Chew* at Keynshaw. The Frome has a range of about twenty miles. The *Yow* or *Yeo* springs from about Compton-Martin, one of the slopes of the Mendip Hills. It is nearly fourteen miles in extent. The *Ax* rises in Wookey Hole or Cavern, on the south side of the same ridge of hills, near to Wells, and it has a course of twenty miles and upwards. It is partly navigable.

The *Brue* comes from the chalk-marl and green sand-hills on the borders of the county, and, after a run of above thirty miles, enters the estuary of the *Parret*.

This river is nearly fifty miles in extent, and has several tributaries, which abound with fine trout. The *Isle* is one of the best of these; it is about sixteen miles long. The river *Cary*

springs from the neighbourhood of Castle-Cary, and runs through an interesting section of the county, for nearly thirty miles.

The muses are sometimes invoked among the anglers in Somersetshire. The following song, in the provincial dialect, is a specimen of their skill and talent in this line:—

Hul lup ! hurn ! hurn ! I've hooked a vish ;
 Lor, Lor ! how e da pool ;
 My rod da beynd, an' reyl da whiz,
 As thoff I'd hooked a bool.

Peck in a stwoan behine theck weed,
 Well zed ! Now hurn below ;
 Work 'en wull, an' he'll be mine
 In 'bout a nour er zo.

I'll try ta tow en, if I can,
 'Pon theck there zandy beych,
 He's jis done up—another flounce
 El drow en in thy reych.

Hooraw ! Hooraw ! Hip, hip, hooraw !
 By gar, the job is done ;
 He's landed saaf—les lug en off,
 An' hev some jolly fun.

A darn gurt whacking salmon 'tis—
 Da weigh 'most twenty poun' ;
 He's zix-an'-thirty inches long,
 An' nigh 'pon twenty roun.

CHAPTER X.

The Rivers and Lakes of Wales.

THIS is a splendid country for the angler. Salmon and trout are here in great abundance; and the fly-fisher may roam from one delightful stream to another, calculating with certainty on always meeting with success, except the weather and season should prove very unfriendly indeed. Besides the pleasures derived from angling itself, there is a constant succession of romantic scenery in travelling throughout Wales; and this cheers and enlivens the mind, and makes every movement with the rod and line doubly grateful to the understanding and feelings.

In noticing the angling in Wales, we shall give an enumeration of its rivers, under the head of each county in the principality. This enumeration will, it is hoped, be sufficiently copious for all ordinary purposes of direction or reference.

This country has long been justly celebrated for its angling sport. Even as far back as Michael Drayton, we find the rivers of South Wales eulogized in song. In his topographical poem, he sings:—

“That Remney, when she saw these gallant nymphs of Gwent
On this appointed match were all so hotly bent,
Where she of ancient time had parted as a mound,
The Monumethian fields and Glamorganian ground,
Intreats the Taff along, as grey as any glass;
With whom clear Cunno comes, a lusty Cambrian lass:
Then Elwy, and with her Eweny holds her way,
And Ogmores, which would yet be there as soon as they,
By Avon called in; when nimbler Neath anon
(To all the neighbouring nymphs for her rare beauties known;
Besides her double head, to help her stream that hath
Her handmaids, Melta sweet, clear Hepsey and Tragarth)
From Brecknock forth doth break; then Dulas, and Cleddaugh,
By Morgany do drive her through her watery saugh;
With Tawy, taking part t’ assist the Cambrian power:
Then Lhu and Logor, given to strengthen them by Gower.”

CAERMARTHENSHIRE.

The principal rivers in this county are the *Towy*, the *Tawe*, the *Great Gwendraeth*, the *Llougher*, and the *Teivi*. This is a more level county than Glamorganshire, but the scenery is equally as interesting in the former as in the latter. Salmon and trout will be found very plentiful in all the rivers. The higher the angler ascends those streams, the better he will find them for fly-fishing.

The *Towy* rises in Caermarthenshire, from a large morass in the extremity of the county. In flowing southward it receives several small streams, in nearly all of which fine trout will be found. In summer-time they are most readily taken with the worm in these small burns. When the *Towy* reaches Llandovery, it receives the waters of the *Braen* and *Gwydderig*, in both of which streams fine trout are to be caught, either with the fly or minnow. In winding its course through the mountains, the eye of the tourist will be gratified with many spots of great picturesque beauty. Below Llandilovawr, the river bends to the west, at Grongar Hill, celebrated by the poet Dyer. It falls into the bay of Caermarthen, after running a course of full sixty miles.

The *Tawe* takes its origin from Pembrokeshire, east of Precelly Mountain. Its course lies through a part of the country most beautifully wooded. It has few tributaries until it reaches the small and picturesque village of St. Clears, a little below which it receives the waters of the *Cathgenny*, and *Cowin*, which flow from the mountains in the north of the county. The fish, in both these streams, are plentiful, and of good quality. The *Tawe* is navigable at St. Clears, and flows into Caermarthen bay, a little below the

town of Langharne, after running a course of twenty-eight miles.

The *Great Gwendraeth* is a stream of about fifteen miles in extent. It rises in the hilly country which separates Caermarthenshire from Glamorganshire. It has the reputation of affording, in some seasons of the year, tolerably fair fishing. There are a few salmon.

The *Llougher* rises in what are called the Black Mountains, and forms the boundary-line of the county. It runs with great rapidity from its source, and receives the waters of many smaller streams, in all of which trout will be found. The river has a course of nearly thirty miles, and falls into Caermarthen Bay.

The angler should, if possible, pay a visit to the lake called *Llyn Van*. It is situated at the base of the highest part of the Black Mountain, designated the *Van* or *Beacon*. The sheet of water is about a mile in length, and abounds with an immense quantity of trout and eels. The scenery about its edges is solitary, naked, and dreary, but still highly interesting when contrasted with the highly-cultivated districts seen in the distance. The most eligible roads for ascending the mountain are from Llandovery and Devynock, near Brecknock.

RADNORSHIRE.

“ Oh ! sylvan Wye ! thou wanderer through the woods,
 How often has my spirit turned to thee !
 Once again I see these hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows now,
 Little lines of sportive wood run wild ; these pastoral forms,
 Green to the very door ; and wreaths of smoke,
 Sent up in silence from among the trees !
 With some uncertain notice, as might seem,
 Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
 Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
 The hermits sits alone.”

WORDSWORTH.

The beautiful and romantic scenery, and good angling to be met with in this part of Wales, make it a favourite spot to many English sportsmen.

The *Wye* is the principal river in the county. It rises from Plynlimmon, and after a run of eighteen miles, enters Radnorshire on the north-west. It then shapes its course towards the town of Hay, and forms the boundary between Radnorshire and Breconshire. As far as the village of Rydspence, the Wye forms also the boundary-line between Radnorshire and Herefordshire. The *Elan*, which rises in the mountainous grounds on the borders of Cardiganshire, joins its waters with those of the Wye. The scenery of the Elan is magnificent.

The most romantic route, connected with

angling on the Wye, is in re-crossing the river from Chepstow to Newport, near the forest of Dean. The views over the Severn and Gloucestershire are magnificent, and the rugged cliffs, overhanging the banks of the Wye, sublime and awful. There is everything in rich abundance to gratify the lover of fine scenery.

The *Ithon* rises in Montgomeryshire, and, from its origin, flows directly south. It receives the principal stock of waters from the central part of the county. It falls into the Wye, seven miles above the town of Builth, after running a course of thirty miles.

There are a number of smaller streams in Radnorshire, as the *Somergil*, the *Edw*, the *Marteg*, the *Clywedog*, the *Arrow*, and *Bach-wy*. All these waters abound with fine trout and grayling, and the scenery along their banks is well worthy the angler's attention.

The lakes of Radnorshire are—*Llyn Gwyn*, near to Rhaiader; *Llyn Llanidin*, about a mile in circumference; *Llyn Bychllyn*, near Panis-castle; *Llyn Gwingy*, on the borders of Cardiganshire; and *Llyn Hendwell*, in the vicinity of Old Radnor. Trout, eels, perch, &c., are found in abundance in all these waters.

FLINTSHIRE.

The angling in this county is generally considered good. The flies the most killing are said to be the blue dun, the coachman, and the black and red palmers. Trolling is not much practised here; but by those anglers who do follow this plan, it does great execution.

The most distinguished rivers are—the *Clwyd*, *Wheeler*, *Dee*, *Levion*, *Elwy*, and *Allen*.

The sheet of water, *Llyn Helig*, is about five miles from Holywell.

DENBIGHSHIRE.

Denbighshire has no independent streams. What tributaries there are, in this part of Wales, have but a short range, though they are pretty well stocked with fish. The scenery on many of their banks is interesting. Small flies, except immediately after rains, are the most killing. In 1841 I saw a beautiful dish of trout taken out of the *Serw* with minnow, several of them weighing from two to four pounds.

The lakes in this county are—*Llyn Alwen*, which forms the source of the Alwen; *Llyn Alet*, enclosed on every side with high and barren mountains; *Llyn Moelure*, eight miles from Llanwrst; *Llyn Llymburn*, in the vicinity of

Nant Llyn, *Chweth Llyn*, *Llyn Conway*, and *Llyn Serne*. All these lakes are well-stocked with trout.

CAERNARVONSHIRE.

On account of the peninsular form of this county, the rivers have a very limited course. The *Conway* takes its rise out of a large sheet of water, and is soon swelled into a considerable stream, by the accession of several tributaries; the *Serw*, the *Clettuer*, and the *Avon Hwch*, on the right; and the *Machno*, and the *Ledan*, on the left. There is a fall in the river *Machno* of considerable height, which, when the waters are full, produces a very romantic effect. There are also several falls and rapids in the *Conway*, and the *Ledan*. After the junction of the latter stream, the Conway flows in a northerly direction, and on its left bank receives the *Llugwy*, which rises from the base of a mountain called Carnedd. In this river there are a great number of beautiful falls, and the country in the immediate vicinity of them, greatly heightens the general effect. The river finally falls into the Irish Channel, under the walls of Conway Castle. Its course, in a straight line, is about thirty miles.

The *Glass Llyn* is one of the most romantic rivers in Wales; its scenery would of itself

amply repay a long journey. There is a fall not far from its source, of nearly three hundred feet, and below this, there are many most delightful streams for the fly. The trout are both numerous and of rich quality. Some English sportsmen have occasionally killed fish here of five and six pounds weight. The river passes through Llyn Gwynan, and Llyn y Dinas, and has a course of about eighteen miles.

The *Gwrfai* rises on the west side of the great Snowdon. The *Seionte* rises from the same mountain, and passes through two lakes, into the Menai, of Caernarvon. Snowdon also gives rise to the *Llynfi*, which enters the Menai, near to Bangor. The average length of these streams is about twelve miles. "The quantity of water," says Mr. Pennant, "which flows from the lakes of Snowdonia is very considerable; so much that I doubt not but collectively they would exceed the waters of the Thames, before it meets the flux of the ocean."

In all these rivers of Caernarvonshire, small lightish-coloured flies are the most successful. There are many expert fishers in this county, who are, generally, very successful—with large dark-bodied flies, with woodcock wings.

When the angler is in this county, he will probably be tempted to pay a visit to the cele-

brated Snowdon, which will amply repay him for his personal labour. We cannot refrain from inserting here, a few remarks from the pen of Mr. Pennant, relative to his visit to this celebrated mountain. "The view from this exalted scene is unbounded. In a former tour I saw from it the county of Chester, the high hills of Yorkshire, part of the north of England, Scotland, and Ireland; a plain view of the Isle of Man,—and that of Anglesey lay extended like a map beneath us, with every rill visible. I took much pains to see this prospect to advantage; sat up at a farm on the west till about twelve, and walked up the whole way. The night was remarkable fine and starry; towards morn the stars faded away, and left a short interval of darkness, which was soon dispersed by the dawn of day. The body of the sun appeared most distinct, with the rotundity of the moon, before it rose high enough to render its beams too brilliant for our sight. The sea, which bounded the western part, was gilt by its beams, first in slender streaks, at length glowed with redness. The prospect was disclosed to us like the gradual drawing up of a curtain in an amphitheatre. We saw more and more, till the heat became so powerful as to attract the mists from the various lakes, which in a slight degree obscured the

prospect. The shadow of the mountain was flung many miles, and showed its bicapitated form; the Wyddfa making one, Crib y Distill the other. I counted, this time, between twenty and thirty lakes, either in this county or Meirionydd (Merioneth) shire. The day proved so excessively hot that my journey cost me the skin of the lower part of my face—before I reached the resting-place, after the fatigue of the morning.”

Prospect of Sunrise from Snowdon.

“How grand the scene from this stupendous height!
 How awfully sublime! The king of day
 Flames in the East; old ocean's waves display
 One globe of fire! one boundless flood of light!
 With white unclouded lustre blaze the skies!
 While Mona's flats, tinged with a golden hue,
 Burst with transcendant beauty on the view;
 And Man, thy blue seen mountains proudly rise.
 Nature beneath seems prostrate; and my sight
 Can hardly grasp the vast immensity!
 Can then the muse attempt to sing of thee,
 Nature's great God! Father of life and light!
 Who bade the sun his annual circle roll,
 Who guides, directs, and animates the whole.”

There are various lakes in this county, in which there are numerous and large trout. The names of the principal of these are—*Ogwen Lake, Lake of Cwm Idwel, the Llanberis Lakes, the Lakes of Nantle, Nant Gwynan, Llyn*

*Cwellyn, Llyn Bochlwyd, Llyn Tal y Llyn,
and Llyn Crafnant.*

MERIONETHSHIRE.

“ And since each one is praised for her peculiar things,
So MERVINIA is rich in mountains, lakes and springs;
And holds herself as great in her superfluous waste,
As others by their towns and fruitful tillage graced.
And therefore to recount her rivers from their springs,
Abridging all delays, MERVINIA thus begins.”

DRAYTON.

The main fishing-rivers in this county are—the *Dee*, the *Maw*, and the *Dovey*. The first has already been described, but we may remark that its higher waters are well adapted for rod angling. The scenery on its banks is most delightful, and many beautiful landscapes and views for the artist present themselves to the sportsman. Before the *Dee* reaches Corwen, it receives a number of mountain-streams, in all of which fine trout may be found, particularly with red worm in the summer months, even when their waters are shallow, and as clear as amber.

The *Maw* has a southern course, from its origin, which lies in the centre of the county; and after flowing eight miles, joins the *Lynianduon*, which is about an equal length with itself. After this junction, the united waters mingle with the *Wnion*, which is twelve miles long, and then

advance to the sea. The Maw is better above the tide-way, for angling purposes, than at or below it. Fine salmon are often hooked, both in the main stream and its tributaries. There is excellent and reasonable accommodation for anglers, along all these rivers.

The *Dovey* rises from a mountain within the border of the county. It flows thirty miles in a south-west direction, through a long and interesting vale, to Cardigan Bay. In its progress thus far, it receives several good angling streams; the *Tafalog*, the *Afon*, the *Dulas*, and the *Cwm-celle*. Here there is a delightful field for the rod.

In addition to these rivers, there is the *Disynwy*, which rises in the Berwyn mountains, and has a run of sixteen miles to the sea. This is a fine little stream.

The Dovey at Tal-y-lyn is crossed by a bridge of eight arches, and presents a most delightful prospect to the eye.

The Dovey in the vicinity of Aberystwith is highly praised for its salmon-fishing. The best time, in the estimation of many anglers, for throwing the fly for the salmon, is after the Michaelmas floods. The heavy fish are said to take the fly greedily here in the month of October. That part of the river between St. John's Pool and Derwent Lassy, is a favourite

spot. One pound is charged for fishing one month, and five pounds for the season. The Cach-y-bondu and the black and red hackles are favourites in this section of the Dovey.

The town of Dolgelly is situated on the banks of the river *Avonvawr*, which winds its course through defiles of mountains of rugged and sublime elevation. Everything here is calculated to inspire the angler with the most delightful feelings. The sport in this stream is first-rate; ten or twelve dozen of trout are soon caught, and though not generally large, they afford a good share of respectable sport.

Should the angler feel inclined to ascend the great Cader-Idris, the second mountain in point of height in Wales, he will enjoy a most delightful view of an immense range of country. The eye will glance over a circumference of full five hundred miles. On the north-east, he will see Ireland, Snowdon, and the other mountains of Caernarvonshire, the Isle of Man, the neighbourhood of Chester, Wrexham, and Salop, the pointed head of the Wrekin, and the undulating tops of the Clee Hills. To the south we can recognise Clifton, Pembrokeshire, St. David's, and Swansea. On the west, the vast prospect of the British Channel. In addition to these distant objects, we see, lying as it were at our

feet, a countless number of mountains, lakes, rivers, harbours, towns, villages, and country-seats, scattered with fascinating effect over the extensive prospect.

In ascending and descending this famous mountain, many lakes or tanks will be met with, full of large trout and other fish. Almost all the waters in these mountain reservoirs are of the most clear and sparkling kind, and their rugged shores are often covered with foliage of the most luxuriant description.

The falls of Dall-y-Mullin, Moddach, and Cayne are objects of universal and unrivalled interest. For many miles around their respective localities, the mountain-scenery is of the most delightful and astonishing kind. At the turn of every rocky promontory, new and surprising views burst upon the eye. A fine mixture of rugged rocks, rich foliage, scattered villages, and whitewashed cottages, give the whole landscape a most enchanting and fairy-like appearance.

The fall of Dall-y-Mullin is full of sublimity, though the waters have only a descent of about fifty feet perpendicular. The rocky prominences, and the foliage of oak trees,—give the view an exceedingly interesting appearance. The further we ascend the steep acclivity, the more grand

and imposing does the general effect of this fall become.

In passing over the slaty mountains of Tylyn-Gwladys, towards the falls of the Cayne and Moddach, many very interesting landscapes present themselves. Indeed, it is in such rambles that the true nature of Welsh scenery can be duly appreciated. Whilst traversing tracts of barren mountains, we suddenly meet with valleys of rich fertility and verdure, watered with clear and gushing streams—full of trout—and foaming over their beds with resistless fury. Nature seems here in her most fascinating and capricious moods, throwing into one view objects the most diversified and opposite to one another.

The falls of the Cayne and the Moddach are separated from each other only by a thick wood. The *Cayne* is considered the finest fall of water in Wales, being full two hundred perpendicular feet, uninterrupted by any rocky projections whatever, and free from the thick foliage which surrounds it. It is impossible to witness this scene but with the most lively feelings of awe and sublimity. The terrific crags, and the never-ceasing tumultuous foam, rivet the mind with undivided attention.

After the waters of the Cayne pass over this

lofty fall, they flow along a rocky bed, till they enter the Moddach. From the fall to this junction, the waters of the Cayne are singularly prolific of trout. They will seldom, however, be found in the rushing part of the stream, but chiefly in the little eddies and recesses of the waters. All the still basins and pools are literally full to the brim—of fish; and no angler, who can throw a line with even tolerable dexterity, need have any just grounds for apprehending a want of success.

The fall of Moddach is only about seventy feet, and is broken into three distinct falls. The first descent is about twenty feet, the next thirty, and the third thirty. There are deep pools or basins at the foot of each fall. The general effect of the whole is very grand. These rocky declivities are clothed with luxuriant foliage, which, when contrasted with the deep shaded glens, gives to the whole scene a most picturesque and imposing appearance.

There are several important lakes in Merionethshire, from a visit to which the angler will receive great pleasure. The chief of these are—*Bala Lake*, one of the largest in Wales; being about four miles in length, by one in breadth. It abounds with pike, trout, eels, perch, and roach. *Tal-y-Llyn* is a beautiful piece of

water ; the scenery about it being very romantic. There are, in addition to these, Lake *Llyn Bodlyn*, near Barmouth, *Llyn Cwm Howel*, *Llyn Irddin*, *Llyn Raithlyn*, *Llyn Pair*, *Llyn Treweryn*, *Llyn Arenniog*, *Llyn Gewirw*, and several other sheets of water of lesser note.

MONTGOMERYSHIRE.

“ Ever charming, ever new,
 When will the landscape tire the view !
 The fountain’s fall, the river’s flow,
 The woody valleys, warm and low,
 The windy summit, wild and high,
 Roughly rushing on the sky !
 The pleasant seat, the ruined tower,
 The naked rock, the shady bower ;
 The town and village, dome and farm,
 Each give each a double charm,
 As pearls upon an Ethiop’s arm.”

DYER.

The principal rivers in this county are—the *Severn*, the *Vrynwy*, and the *Tanat*. There are, besides, several other good streams for angling, which, indeed, is very excellent in every part of the county. The *Severn* rises from the eastern side of Plinlimmon, and flows easterly, and then northerly. It is well stocked with trout in this locality ; and, after a summer freshet in June or July, some sport with the fly may be anticipated. The streams of the *Severn* in

Montgomeryshire are well adapted for rod-fishing ; much more so than further down the river.

The *Vrynwy* rises on the border of the county, and receives a number of small streams ; as, the *Eunant*, the *Afon*, the *Gedig*, the *Afon Gynnan*, the *Glasgwen*, and the *Cown*. All these feeders abound with good trout, and the scenery on their banks is often grand and sublime. After the *Vrynwy* receives these tributaries, it flows a south-easterly course for twenty miles, and then receives the waters of the *Twrch*, which has a range of more than twenty-two miles. The *Twrch* has several small feeders, which, at certain seasons of the year, afford good sport to the angler. The *Vrynwy* receives the *Cain*, and, a little farther down, the *Tanat*. This river rises near the border of the county. It receives several waters ; as the *Rhaiadr*, the *Afon Harrog*, and the *Ymrch*. Here there is good fly-fishing. The rivers are bright, sparkling, and flowing.

You may use almost every possible colour of flies in this county, particularly during the months of April and May. I have seen them varied in every way ; but one thing should be strictly observed, they ought not to be too large. Large flies will not answer on any account.

The lakes in this county are—*Llyn y Bugail*, celebrated for its fine and large trout,—some

having been taken in it twelve and fourteen pounds weight ; *Llyn-y-Grinwydden*, which contains only eels and carp ; *Llyn Cadwiv*, a good trolling water ; and *Glas-Llyn*, which contains abundance of red and common trout.

CARDIGANSHIRE.

In the rivers and lakes in this county there is excellent angling. There are many others, however, which contain considerable quantities of both salmon and trout. The principal rivers are—the *Tyvy*, the *Rydal*, the *Istwith*, the *Towey*, and the *Claerwen*. These streams flow through most interesting valleys, and their waters are, in many localities, the most beautiful for fly-angling imaginable.

The *Arth*, the *Ayton*, the *Wirrai*, and the *Leri*, are small but good streams. There are very beautiful and romantic spots upon their banks, and no lover of the sublimities of nature can wander by their beds, without experiencing the most lively feelings of pleasure.

In the spring and autumn many salmon are caught in all the waters in this county with the rod. It abounds with very expert brothers of the craft.

The *Rydal* is an excellent angling stream, particularly in its higher departments. Should

the angler ascend the river, he will find the vale by its banks the most enchanting and lovely imaginable. It is enclosed with lofty mountains, and covered with the most luxuriant foliage to their very summits. The stream flows through huge masses of rock, forming sparkling and foaming patches of running water, and giving to the whole landscape that fascinating character which brings to our minds the lines of the Bard of Avon :

————— “ is not this vale
More free from peril than the envious court ?
Here feel we but the penalty of Adam,
The season's difference, as the icy fang,
And churlish chiding of the winter's wind.”

The angling is good in every direction, especially for minnow in summer, after a little fresh in the river. Flies of a tolerably large size may here be used with success.

As the angler proceeds up the stream, he will come to the interesting pass called “The Devil's Bridge.” This is a structure of two arches over a deep chasm, in a chain of mountains of considerable elevation, whose sides are generally covered with a thick impenetrable mist. The river *Mynach*, which runs into the Rydal, flows beneath, and is full of small trout. This is one of the most romantic spots imaginable. The

steep sides of the rocks, and the violent rushing of the waters, full one hundred and twenty feet from the river's bed, impress upon the mind ideas of grandeur and sublimity never to be effaced. Should the angler have agility and strength to make his way up the banks of this tributary, Mynach, he will find a succession of the most surprising mountain views which ever met his eye. It is impossible for any language to convey even the most distant conception of these landscapes. Mr. Cumberland observes, that "The Mynach, coming down from beneath the Devil's Bridge, has no equal for height or beauty that I know of; for although a streamlet to the famous Fall of Narni, in Italy, yet it rivals it in height, and surpasses it in elegance."

"After passing deep below the bridge, as through a narrow firth, with noises loud and ruinous, into a confined chasm, the fleet waters pour headlong and impetuous, and leaping from rock to rock with fury, literally lash the mountain's sides; sometimes almost embowered among deep groves, and gushing at last into a fan-like form, the fall rattling among the loose stones of the Devil's Hole, where, to all appearance, it shoots into a gulph, and silently steals away; for so much is carried off in spray, during the incessant *rèpercussions* it experiences in this

long tortuous shoot, that, in all probability, not half the water arrives at the bottom of its profound and sullen grave."

In this vicinity, every little vale has its pool of water, and in some their centres have deep, ravening, dark gulphs, from which torrents issue which strike the ear with fearfulness. These waters seem struggling and raging for some wider outlet, and keep boiling, eddying, and gushing through narrow gorges, or hurled over abrupt precipices. Now you see an overhanging rock, beneath which the stream glides unbroken like an arrow; and then, at a short distance, the impetuous torrent is leaping from crag to crag, dashing its foam around in every direction. These river-scenes must be seen, to be duly appreciated.

Perchance the angler may have to witness, in these mountain-passes, a thunder-storm. This is a rich banquet of sublimity. The whole amphitheatre of mountains around him is suddenly canopied in darkness. Cloud rolls over cloud in dense and black array. The scene becomes grand and impressive: the artillery of heaven plays along on the brows of the frowning summits, in reiterated thunders, to which no pen can ever do justice. Here we feel how little and mean we are, when contrasted with nature's agents in fierce collision.

Cardiganshire abounds with antiquities. There are, besides many Druidical remains, a Roman station at Llanio, and a Roman road, traversing the country in a north and south direction, from that place. Remains of castles are either standing, or at least it is evident that such fortifications have existed, at Cardigan, Aberystwith, Lampeter, Ystradmeyric, Cilcennin, Llanrysted, Dinerth, Moyddgn, Abereinon, Penwedic, Castell Gwalter, Castell Cadwyan, Hên Castell, Castell Flemis, &c. There were also religious houses at Cardigan, Lampeter, Llanrysted, Llanddewi-Brevi, and Strata-Florida. The abbey last-mentioned, of which a fine Saxon arch and some walls now stand, is situated about five miles from Fregaron. It was the depository of parts of the records of the principality, and the burial-place of many Welsh princes and celebrated bards. Rhys Gruffydd founded the first abbey in 1164; this building, however, was destroyed, and a new one erected two miles distant from the original site. We also find that Edward I. granted £78 to the Abbey of Strata-Florida for damages sustained during the "late war and conflagration."

The salmon-leap on the *Tivy* called forth the poetic powers of Michael Drayton, two hundred and fifty years ago:—

" When as the salmon seeks a fresher stream to find,
 Which hitherto, from the sea, comes yearly by his kind,
 So he in season grows, and stems the watery tract,
 Where Tivy falling down, doth make a cataract,
 Forced by the rising rocks that there her course oppose,
 As though within their bands they meant her to inclose.
 Here, when the labouring fish doth at the foot arrive,
 He finds that by his strength but vainly he doth strive ;
 His tail takes in his teeth ; and, bending like a bow
 That 's to the compass drawn, aloft himself doth throw ;
 Then springing at his height, as doth a little wand,
 That, bended end to end, and flirled from the hand,
 Far off itself doth cast ; so doth the salmon vault :
 And if at first he fail, a second somersault
 He instantly essays ; and from his nimble wing
 Still gerting, never leaves until himself he fling
 Above the streamful top of the surrounding heap."

The still-water fishing in this county is good.
 The *Llyn Teivi* is interesting, as well as the
 other smaller collections of water in its vicinity.
 There are likewise *Lake Maes*, *Berwyn*, *Llyn
 Hir*, a fine spot for bait-fishing, and *Llyn Aedd-
 wear*, full of red trout.

BRECKNOCKSHIRE.

The chief rivers in this county are the *Usk*,
 and the *Wye* ; the latter has already been men-
 tioned. The *Usk* is a splendid stream, and one
 of first-rate capabilities. The scenery on its
 banks is of the most enchanting description ;
 and the river itself is constituted of fine rippling
 streams, deep pools, and a rocky and gravelly

bed. Ten or twelve dozen of good-sized trout may be taken on a favourable day, and perhaps two or three salmon ; this may be considered very fair sport. The river is subjected to sudden freshes, but the waters soon subside and run clear ; and then the fishing is more than usually good.

In ordinary seasons, there is very good angling in the Usk in the month of March. Some use dun and some light-coloured flies ; they are both equally good.

The Usk is a noble river, and the fishing, near the town of the same name, is very good, both for salmon and trout. The angler may spend a week here with great pleasure. The beautiful walk by the river side to the ruins of the Castle, opens out a fine view of the town. This is altogether a most delightful spot.

If the angler takes the route to Caerleon, he will witness many interesting pieces of scenery. Newport Castle, on the banks of the Usk, is a fine object. It was once a place of considerable extent, and military importance. The river has an imposing effect from the tower. Large trout have of late years been taken by some anglers with the minnow, from the waters of the Usk. The Cach-y-bondu is a great favourite here.

A few miles below this town, the scenery is very delightful. Diverging into a zig-zag track,

through a somewhat dense thicket, where a broad cattle-track is formed, we come to the base of a lofty mountain, by the edges of which the stream flows through a forest of pines. The stillness around, broken only now and then by the murmuring of the water, which runs sparkling and bubbling along a rugged bed ; the beautiful and rank vegetation which every way meets the eye ; the serenity of the atmosphere ; and the tranquillizing effect of the whole on the mind ; are such as to rivet the most gifted poet's fancy to the bowers and beauties of this enchanting spot. A great portion of the stream runs under a green arcade of trees, of the richest-tinted foliage, while the ivy and the woodbine fill up the vacancies among the trunks of the trees. The branches meet over the water, and form a thickly interlaced and fretted roof ; and the sun-beam is permitted only here and there to fall upon the reflecting stream. The current flows on through a charming avenue, cool, dim, and stretching into the most graceful perspective imaginable. Nothing can be more bewitching than the glance up and down this arborescent enclosure, so happily accompanied by water and shade, and forming such an agreeable contrast to the clear cloudless sky and warm sunbeams without. The personifications of poets, and the dreams of the

most visionary enthusiasts, would be in striking keeping here. What a beautiful spot for the nymphs of the woods to revel in! How beautifully would their slender and angelic forms harmonise with the luxuriant foliage of this natural shade, outvying all that art has, or ever can achieve.

In addition to these two rivers, there is the *Honddu*, which rises in Drum-dhu, and falls into the Usk at Brecknock; the *Yrfon*, which rises in Bryngerw, in the north-west boundary of the county, and falls into the Wey about a mile above Builth; the *Elan*, the *Caerwen*, and the *Fawe*. The *Farrell* also, a small river rising in Byrn-du, joins the Usk a little above Brecknock; and the *Faf-Fechan* (small), and *Faf-Fawr* (large), which rise in different parts of the south declivity of the Brecknock Beacons, unite into a considerable stream, the *Faf*, at the south boundary of the county, near Cyfarthfa Park. None of these streams are navigable.

The lakes of this county are—*Welshpool*, *Pwll Binery*, and *Llyn Vawr*.

PEMBROKESHIRE.

There are few rivers in this county. The *Eastern Cleddy* rises in the Precelli Mountains, and the *Western Cleddy* springs from the vicinity of St. Catherine's. The *Nezern* is a

good angling stream, and falls into the sea at Newport. The *Gwayn* and the *Solva* are not of any importance to the angler. On the whole, however, this is a very interesting part of Wales for the angler.

GLAMORGANSHIRE.

The general course of all the rivers in this Welsh county is from north to south. The *Romney* takes its rise from the north-east section of Glamorganshire, and separates it from Monmouthshire. It runs a course of full thirty miles, and receives no tributaries worthy of notice. There are excellent trout in it; and its banks are very interesting.

The *Taff* is considered the largest river in the county, and it springs from Brecknockshire, between two mountains called Capellante and Vau, and flows a south-eastern direction, past Merthyr-Tydvil, Llandaff, and Cardiff, into Pennarth Harbour. The course of the river is about forty miles. It has several tributaries: the *Little Taff*, twelve miles long, the *Cynon*, about the same extent, and the *Great Routha*, about ten miles in extent. All these feeders take their rise in the county. The *Ely* is also a tributary, and has a course of nearly twenty miles.

The vale of Glamorganshire is considered the garden of South Wales. The *Taff*, rapid in its movements, and clear and purling in its

streams, greatly heightens the general effect. The banks are rocky, and clothed with wood to the water's edge. Rich, extensive, and diversified views will be found all along the banks of this river. As it approaches Merthyr, it furnishes the moving power to many manufacturing establishments. On the banks of the Little Taff, which is well stocked with fish, the most romantic scenery will be found.

Should the angler take the direction of Pont Neath-Vechan, he will pass through a mountainous, barren, but romantic country. Hanging rocks, and gushing cataracts, present themselves at almost every turn. This is really a spot where the lover of nature's beauties feels he could for ever take up his abode. About a mile from Vechan is the river *Neath*, flowing through an interesting valley. This is a fine angling station; and good and reasonable accommodation will be found in the inns. Woods, rocks, and water-falls are in rich and varied abundance.

The fall of Scotenogam, on the river *Purthan*, in the immediate vicinity, is well worthy of particular notice. The waters tumble over a rock seventy feet high, and when they are full, the sight is grand and sublime. The Lady's Cascade, on the *Neath*, is of a greatly inferior description. Many fine trout are taken every

season in these waters. The best flies in clear and dry weather, particularly if there should be an easterly wind, are the palmers and small hackles, and after summer freshes, light-winged flies. Trolling, when the waters are in this latter condition, is a never-failing source of success. There is excellent angling in all these rivers. It is no uncommon thing to obtain ten or twelve dozen of fine trout in the course of a few hours.

The *Ogmore* rises in some mountain-groups in the centre of the county, flows by Bridgend, and after a run of eighteen or twenty miles, falls into the sea between Nash Point and Sker Point. It receives two small feeders in its route, called the *Garw* and the *Llynvi*.

The *Daw* springs out of the lands near Cowbridge, and flows into the sea at Aberthaw. It is about twelve miles long. There are some good trout and salmon in it.

The *Avon* rises out of the Llangeinor mountain, and has a course of about fifteen miles. It falls into Swansea Bay. It has two small tributaries, called the *Carrwg*, and the *Little Avon*. In all these waters there is good angling, and comfortable accommodation for sportsmen, along the banks.

The lakes of this county are few in number, and very small. They are situated chiefly among the mountains.

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